THE DISTRIBUTION OF PRONOUN CASE FORMS IN ENGLISH

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Heidi Quinn

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Key to abbreviations used throughout the main volume

1du = first person dual (pronoun)

1pl = first person plural (pronoun)

1pl-NP = construction where a 1pl pronoun is followed by a noun phrase (e.g. *we New Zealanders*)

1ps = first person (pronoun)

1sg = first person singular (pronoun)

2du = second person dual (pronoun)

2pl = second person plural (pronoun)

2ps = second person (pronoun)

2sg = second person singular (pronoun)

3pl = third person plural (pronoun)

3pl-NP = construction where a 3pl pronoun is followed by a noun phrase (e.g. *them politicians*)

3ps = third person (pronoun)

3sgF = third person singular feminine (pronoun)

3sgM = third person singular masculine (pronoun)

3sgN = third person singular neuter (pronoun)

ACC = accusative

Arg-Agreement = Argument Agreement

Arg-Case = Argument Case

DAT = dative

Def-Case = Default Case

EME = Early Middle English

EModE = Early Modern English

FEM = feminine

GEN = genitive

INV = Invariant Strong Form constraint

LF = Logical Form

MASC = masculine

ME = Middle English

NOM = nominative

NOM/ACC = syncretic nominative and accusative form

non-1sg = pronouns other than the first person singular that have alternating case forms (i.e. *he/him, she/her, we/us, they/them*)

OBJ = objective (syncretic dative and accusative form)

OBL = oblique (syncretic genitive and dative form)

OE = Old English

OT = Optimality Theory

PL = plural

Pos-Agreement = Positional Agreement

Pos-Case = Positional Case

RPC = Relative Positional Coding

SF = Semantic Form

SG = singular

TS = θ-structure (an interface-level between Semantic Form and Phrase Structure)

Abstract

This thesis investigates the influence of linguistic factors on the distribution of pronoun case forms in Modern English and argues that the alternation between nominative and objective pronoun forms is a surface phenomenon best captured in a probabilistic constraint-based approach, where constraints are weighted and the combined weight of constraint violations determines the probability of occurrence of a particular variant.

I propose that the distribution of both weak and strong pronoun forms in English is affected by the interaction of two structural case constraints: Argument Case, which restricts the overt case form of structural arguments of a predicate; and Positional Case, which constrains the form of pronouns that appear as the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out. Pronouns that occupy surface positions not covered by the Positional Case constraint are further influenced by a Default Case constraint that calls for objective pronoun forms.

A survey of data reported in existing studies suggests that all instances of pronoun case variation that cannot be given a purely case-based account occur in strong pronoun contexts. The consistent nominative/objective case distinction found with weak pronouns is due to their syntactic deficiency and the increasing importance of Positional Case in English. Unlike strong pronouns, weak pronouns must be licensed by an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out, which means that they will generally be subject to the Positional Case constraint as well as the Argument Case constraint. Strong pronouns, on the other hand, tend to occur in positions not covered by Positional Case, which leaves them open to other influences.

I present results from a written survey of 90 speakers of English, which indicate that strong pronoun forms no longer merely identify the structural case of a pronoun, but also code its position within a syntactic construction, and identify its morphosyntactic status as a strong pronoun. These additional functions of strong pronoun forms are captured in two Relative Positional Coding constraints and a set of Invariant Strong Form constraints.

Variation occurs where the demands of the case constraints clash with the requirements of Relative Positional Coding and the tendency towards invariant strong pronoun forms.

The case trends reported in existing studies suggest that Relative Positional Coding and the tendency towards invariant forms affects not only personal pronouns but also *wh*-pronouns. For personal pronouns, the emerging invariant forms are the objectives *me, him, her, us, them*, but for *wh*-pronouns, the emerging invariant forms are the nominatives *who* and *whoever*. As a result, the Invariant *wh*-form constraints clash with the three case constraints in different environments than the remaining Invariant Strong Form constraints.

Discrepancies between the grouping of pronoun forms associated with structural case and the grouping of pronoun forms associated with Relative Positional Coding are largely responsible for the distributional differences between strong 1sg (*I/me*) and non-1sg forms (*he/him, she/her, we/us, they/them, who/whom*). For the purposes of structural case, *I* groups with the non-1sg nominatives *he, she, we, they, who*, and *me* groups with the non-1sg objectives *him, her, us, them, whom*. For Relative Positional Coding, on the other hand, *I* patterns with *him, her, us, them, whom*, and *me* patterns with *he, she, we, they, who*.

All of the trends identified in this study point to an increasing influence of surface position on pronoun case choice, which can be seen as a correlate of the shift from morphological to positional licensing at the end of the Middle English period.

0 Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to provide a systematic syntactic analysis of the distribution of pronoun case forms in Modern English, and to relate current pronoun case trends to historical changes in the English case system and in the licensing of structural arguments.

The distribution of the pronoun case forms *I/me, he/him, she/her, we/us, they/them* and *who/whom* in Modern English has been the subject of much linguistic debate. On the one hand, formal approaches to case tend to assume that the alternation between nominative and objective pronoun forms in English is determined exclusively by structural case mechanisms. On the other hand, the distributional differences between personal pronoun forms and *wh*-forms, and the variability of pronoun case in coordinates, *it*-clefts, *than* comparatives, and similar constructions, are often cited as evidence that pronoun case selection in English is largely unsystematic, and best treated as the product of local rules, grammatical viruses, and hypercorrection (cf. Emonds 1985 & 1986, Sobin 1997, Lasnik & Sobin 2000).

I will demonstrate that the presence versus absence of variation in pronoun case choice largely correlates with the morphosyntactic status of the pronoun (cf. Cardinaletti & Starke 1999). English weak pronouns, which are licensed in structural positions associated with case assignment in formal theory, do indeed exhibit the consistent nominative/objective case distinction predicted by general approaches to case. The distribution of strong pronouns, on the other hand, is difficult to capture in a purely case-based account.

Despite the wealth of anecdotal evidence and the considerable amount of speculation that surrounds the distribution of strong pronoun forms in English, very little systematic research has been carried out so far to substantiate the various hypotheses. Early studies of pronoun case variation were largely based on literary corpora and can therefore provide only limited evidence on the pronoun case system of individual speakers (cf. Jespersen & Haislund 1949, Visser 1963, Klima 1964, Erdmann 1978, and Householder 1986 & 1987). Wales' (1996) more recent corpus study, and the empirical surveys carried out by Emonds (1985 & 1986), Parker et al. (1988), and Quattlebaum (1994) suggest that there is systematic case variation between pronouns as well as between speakers, but so far no one has tested the whole range of alternating personal pronouns in a set of comparable environments on a sizable number of speakers.

In this thesis, I present the results of a written survey of 90 native speakers of English, which tested the distribution of all alternating personal pronoun forms (i.e. *I/me, he/him, she/her, we/us, they/them*) in coordinates (1), *it*-clefts (2), and *than* comparatives (3), and the distribution of 1pl (*we/us*) and 3pl forms (*they, them*) in pronoun-NP constructions (4).

(1) Stuart and **I/me**

(2) It was **he/him** who/that insisted on going to the rally.

(3) Oliver is bound to respond more quickly than **she/her**.

(4) **we/us** New Zealanders

The pronoun case patterns attested in the survey suggest that case considerations still influence the distribution of pronoun forms in these constructions. However, both the survey results and the case trends reported in existing studies indicate that this case influence is weakened by a trend towards invariant strong pronoun forms. For personal pronouns, the emerging invariant forms are the objectives *me, him, her, us, them.* For *wh*-pronouns, the emerging invariant forms are the nominatives *who* and *whoever.*

The survey results also point to considerable distributional differences between 1sg (*I/me*) and non-1sg pronoun forms (*he/him, she/her, we/us, they/them*), and confirm some of the often noted correlations between conjunct position and pronoun form in coordinates (cf. Schwartz 1985, Zoerner 1995, Sobin 1997, Johannessen 1998). This suggests that strong pronoun forms no longer merely identify the structural case of a pronoun, but also code its position within a syntactic construction.

The systematic variability in the responses of individual survey participants indicates that pronoun case is a surface phenomenon in Modern English, and is best modelled in a surface-oriented constraint-based approach where constraint violations do not necessarily crash the derivation.

I will argue that the distribution of pronoun case forms is determined largely by the interaction of a small set of violable constraints (5)-(10).

(5) **Argument Case**

The overt case form of any structural argument of a predicate must comply with the structural linking between cases and arguments in the θ-structure (cf. Wunderlich 1997, Kiparsky 1997).

(6) **Positional Case**

The overt case form of an argument noun phrase appearing as the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out must match the case/agreement features of this functional head,
iff the position of the noun phrase at Spell-Out differs from its θ-position.

(7) **Default Case**

The overt case form of **any noun phrase not covered by the Positional Case constraint** must match the default case of a language.

(8) **Relative Positional Coding 1**

If a constituent A asymmetrically c-commands a constituent B in a given syntactic construction,
then A must be **gracile**, and B must be **robust**.

The set of gracile pronoun forms comprises: *me, he, she, we, they, who*
The set of robust pronoun forms comprises: *I, him, her, us, them, whom*

(9) **Relative Positional Coding 2**

If a constituent A asymmetrically c-commands a constituent B in a given syntactic construction,
then B must be **more robust** than A.

In the set of gracile pronoun forms, *they* is more robust than *me, he, she, we.*

(10) **Invariant Strong Form**

The morphological form of **strong pronoun forms** must be **invariant** in all contexts. There is a separate Invariant constraint for each pronoun.

The invariant personal pronoun forms are: *me, him, her, us, them*
The invariant *wh*-forms are: *who, whoever*

The interaction of these constraints can be modelled in a probabilistic approach where constraints are weighted and the probability of occurrence of a particular variant is determined by the combined weight of the constraint violations it incurs (cf. Guy 1997, Mohanan 1998). For individual speakers, variability in pronoun case occurs in contexts where the combined weight of constraint violations is similar for both forms of a pronoun. Variation between speakers arises from different relative weightings of the various constraints.

Discrepancies between the grouping of pronoun forms associated with structural case and the grouping of pronoun forms associated with Relative Positional Coding are largely responsible for the distributional differences between strong 1sg and non-1sg forms. For structural case, *I* patterns with the non-1sg nominatives *he, she, we, they, who*, and *me* patterns with the non-1sg objectives *him, her, us, them, whom*. For Relative Positional Coding, on the other hand, *I* groups with *him, her, us, them, whom* to form the robust series, and *me* groups with *he, she, we, they, who* to form the gracile series (8).

Both the survey results and data from existing studies of pronoun case highlight the importance of structural position to pronoun case in Modern English. The virtual absence of case variation with weak pronouns, which must be licensed in the specifier of an agreement-related functional head, is most easily captured by assuming that the Positional Case constraint outweighs the Argument Case constraint in Modern English. This relative weighting of the two case constraints is further supported by the pronoun case patterns attested in strong pronoun contexts. In Old English, on the other hand, the case form of a pronoun or noun phrase appears to have been largely determined by Argument Case. The differences between Modern English pronoun case and Old English case marking support Kiparsky's (1997) hypothesis that the phonology-driven loss of morphological case marking on nouns prompted a shift from morphological to positional licensing of structural arguments during the Middle English period (cf. also Allen 1995). The increasing influence of Positional Case and the reanalysis of pronoun case forms as markers of structural position can be seen as by-products of this shift.

The thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 provides a detailed account of the history of case marking and case assignment in English.

Chapter 2 discusses different formal approaches to pronoun case and argues that the distribution of pronoun forms in Modern English is influenced by two structural case constraints: Argument Case, which is determined by a direct linking mechanism that relates case to argument structure, and Positional Case, which depends on the surface structure relation between a noun phrase and an agreement-related functional head. Any pronoun that occupies a position not covered by Positional Case, is subject to the Default Case constraint.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine some of the existing evidence for pronoun case variation involving *wh-* and personal pronoun forms, and conclude that the variation attested cannot be accounted for purely in terms of the three case constraints proposed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5 demonstrates that all instances of pronoun case variation that cannot be given a purely case-based account occur in strong pronoun contexts. The case of weak pronouns is almost entirely predictable from Positional Case requirements because weak pronouns are only licensed in the specifier of certain agreement-related functional heads.

Chapter 6 outlines the methodology of the empirical survey. Copies of the questionnaires are given in Appendix 1.

Chapter 7 presents a summary of the survey results. More detailed tables can be found in Appendix 2-11.

Chapter 8 takes a closer look at the influence of factors other than case on the distribution of strong pronoun forms in English, and proposes two additional sets of constraints: the Relative Positional Coding constraints, which relate pronoun form to syntactic position, and the Invariant Strong Form constraints, which capture the general tendency towards the use of invariant pronoun forms in strong pronoun contexts.

Chapter 9 looks at ways of modelling the interaction of the proposed constraints, and concludes that the pronoun case patterns attested in the survey are best captured in a probabilistic constraint-weighting approach.

Chapter 10 considers the wider implications of the pronoun case trends identified in this study and concludes that the pronoun case variation in Modern English is largely the result of a diachronic change in the structural licensing of arguments.

1 The history of the English case system

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1.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at the history of case marking and case assignment in English. Since a detailed study of the diachronic developments in the English case system would have been beyond the scope of this thesis, much of the discussion in this chapter is based on Allen's (1995) comprehensive study of case marking in the history of English.

Changes in the English case system affected both the way in which case was assigned to noun phrases, and the morphological realisation of case distinctions. One of the most important conclusions Allen draws from her investigations is that both the loss of lexical case marking and the reduction of overt case morphology were gradual and systematic (1995: 211f, 443f). Although the deterioration of the English case system is most evident in the Early Middle English period (EME), we already find a fair amount of syncretism in the case morphology of Old English (OE) nouns and adjectives. Similarly, a tendency to avoid lexical case marking in favour of structural case assignment is already present in late OE.

Allen (1995: 445) notes that the loss of lexical case marking on objects appears to be closely related to the loss of the morphological distinction between accusative and dative case. I will therefore give an overview of the changes in case morphology during the OE and ME periods in Sections 1.1 and 1.2, before taking a closer look at the increasing importance of structural case assignment in the history of English in Section 1.3. Section 1.4 concludes the historical overview with a brief discussion of morphological changes in the paradigm of the 2nd person (2ps) pronoun during the Early Modern English (EModE) period.

1.1 Morphological case in Old English

As can be seen from the tables in (1)-(3), OE nouns and adjectives do not distinguish between nominative (NOM) and accusative (ACC) in the plural. The only noun classes to exhibit distinct nominative and accusative inflections in the singular are the strong feminine *o*-stems and the masculine and feminine nouns in the weak declension class. These stems nevertheless exhibit case syncretism, but between accusative, genitive (GEN), and dative (DAT) singular forms. The same syncretism is found on weak adjectives (Kemenade 1987: 102-103; Mitchell 1985: 4, § 9).

Feminine *-i* nouns and all *-u* stems have only one form for nominative, accusative, and genitive plural. Singular genitive and dative forms are identical for all *u*-stems and the neuter nouns in the weak declension class (Kemenade 1987: 102-103).

(1) Case inflections on strong nouns in OE (Kemenade 1987: 102)[1]

***a*-stems**	**masculine**		**neuter**	
	singular	**plural**	**singular**	**plural**
NOM	Ø	-as	Ø / -e	-u / Ø
ACC	Ø	-as	Ø / -e	-u / Ø
GEN	-es	-a	-es	-a
DAT	-e	-um	-e	-um

***i*-stems**	**masculine**		**neuter**		**feminine**	
	singular	**plural**	**singular**	**plural**	**singular**	**plural**
NOM	Ø	-e / -as	Ø	-u / Ø	Ø	-a
ACC	Ø	-e / -as	Ø	-u / Ø	Ø	-a
GEN	-es	-a	-es	-a	-e	-a
DAT	-e	-um	-e	-um	-i	-um

***u*-stems**	**masculine & feminine**	
	singular	**plural**
NOM	-u / Ø	-a
ACC	-u / Ø	-a
GEN	-a	-a
DAT	-a	-um

***o*-stems**	**feminine**	
	singular	**plural**
NOM	-u / Ø	-a / -e
ACC	-e	-a / -e
GEN	-e	-a
DAT	-e	-um

[1] Shading indicates syncretism. Key to the abbreviations used in the tables: NOM = nominative, ACC = accusative, GEN = genitive, DAT = dative; Ø indicates that the stem surfaces without a suffix; phonological variants of a suffix are separated by a slash, e.g. *Ø / -e*.

(2) Case inflections on weak nouns in OE (Kemenade 1987: 103)[2]

weak stems	masculine		feminine		neuter	
	singular	plural	singular	plural	singular	plural
NOM	-a	-an	-e	-an	-e	-an
ACC	-an	-an	-an	-an	-e	-an
GEN	-an	-ena	-an	-ena	-an	-ena
DAT	-an	-um	-an	-um	-an	-um

Masculine and feminine adjectives in the strong declension class have distinct nominative, accusative, and oblique singular forms, but only the masculine and neuter adjectives distinguish between the genitive and the dative in the singular (3).

(3) Case inflections on strong adjectives in OE (Kemenade 1987: 103; Allen 1995: 164)

strong stems	masculine		feminine		neuter	
	singular	plural	singular	plural	singular	plural
NOM	Ø	-e	Ø / -u	-e	Ø	Ø / -u
ACC	-ne	-e	-e	-e	Ø	Ø / -u
GEN	-es	-ra	-re	-ra	-es	-ra
DAT	-um	-um	-re	-um	-um	-um

Even the paradigms of the definite determiner, the *wh*-pronouns, and the personal pronouns exhibit some case syncretism (Kemenade 1987: 103-104; Allen 1995: 165; Mitchell 1985: 4, § 9; Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 116). We find no nominative-accusative distinction in the neuter and plural paradigms of the definite determiner (4) or in the paradigms of the 3rd person singular neuter (3sgN) and the 3rd person plural (3pl) pronoun (5). The nominative-accusative distinction is also absent in the neuter *wh*-pronoun paradigm (6). Syncretism between genitive and dative forms can be found with both the feminine determiner (4) and the 3rd person singular feminine (3sgF) pronoun (5).

[2] The inflections found on weak adjectives are identical to those found on weak nouns, with the exception that the plural genitive suffix may also take the form *-ra* with weak adjectives.

(4) Paradigm of the definite determiner in OE[3]
(Kemenade 1987: 104; Allen 1995: 165)

OE determiner	masculine	singular feminine	neuter	plural
NOM	se	seo	Þæt	Þa
ACC	Þone	Þa	Þæt	Þa
GEN	Þæs	Þære	Þæs	Þara
DAT	Þæm	Þære	Þæm	Þæm

(5) 3rd preson (3ps) pronominal paradigms in OE[4]
(Jember et al. 1975: ix; Kemenade 1987: 103f; Gelderen 2000: 21)

OE 3ps pronoun	masculine	singular feminine	neuter	plural
NOM	he	heo	hit	hi(e)
ACC	hine	hi(e)	hit	hi(e)
GEN	his	hi(e)re	his	hi(e)ra
DAT	him	hi(e)re	him	him

(6) *wh*-pronoun paradigm in OE
(Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 116; Jember et al. 1975: x)

OE *wh*-pronoun	masculine & feminine	neuter
NOM	hwa	hwæt
ACC	hwone	hwæt
GEN	hwam	hwam
DAT	hwæs	hwæs

The 1st person (1ps) and 2nd person (2ps) accusative forms *mec, Þec, usic, eowic, uncit,*and *incit* appear to have been used mainly in the oldest texts,[5] and were

[3] I have followed the transcription conventions adopted in existing theoretical studies of OE syntax, and omitted any indication of vowel length from the historical data presented here (cf. Kemenade 1987, Allen 1995).

[4] Key to abbreviations used in the pronoun tables and discussion: 1ps = first person, 1sg = first person singular, 1dual = first person dual, 1pl = first person plural; 2ps = second person, 2sg = second person singular, 2dual = second person dual, 2pl = second person plural; 3ps = third person, 3sg = third person singular, 3pl = third person plural.

[5] Gelderen (2000: 33f) reports small numbers of *mec, þec, usic* and *eowic* in the epic poem *Beowulf* (MS dated approx. 1000, from an 8th century original); *mec, þec*, and *incit* occur in the gospel texts of *The Junius MS* (approx 1000, with parts possibly from the 8th century), and *mec* is also quite prominent in the *Riddles* part of the *Exeter Book* (Gelderen 2000: 43-46). According to Gelderen (2000: 61), *mec* and *þec* are more common in *The Vespasian Psalter* (Mercian dialect, early half of 9th century) than in other texts. For an overview of the occurrence of 1ps and 2ps accusative and dative forms in Old English see Gelderen (2000: 200-204).

already supplanted by the dative forms *me, Þe, us, eow, unc,* and *inc* during the OE period (7). This extension of the dative foreshadows analogous later developments in the paradigms of the 3rd person singular masculine (3sgM), feminine (3sgF), and plural (3pl) pronouns (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 221).

(7) 1ps and 2ps pronominal paradigms in OE
(Jember et al. 1975: ix; Kemenade 1987: 103f; Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 221; Gelderen 2000: 21)

early OE texts	**1sg**	**2sg**	**1dual**[6]	**2dual**	**1pl**	**2pl**
NOM	ic	Þu	wit	git	we	ge
ACC	mec	Þec	uncit	incit	usic	eowic
GEN	min	Þin	uncer	incer	ure	eower
DAT	me	Þe	unc	inc	us	eow
later OE texts	**1sg**	**2sg**	**1dual**	**2dual**	**1pl**	**2pl**
NOM	ic	Þu	wit	git	we	ge
ACC	me	Þe	unc	inc	us	eow
GEN	min	Þin	uncer	incer	ure	eower
DAT	me	Þe	unc	inc	us	eow

The demise of the old 1ps and 2ps accusative forms (*mec, þec*, etc.) is further highlighted by OE reflexive data. As (8) illustrates, simple objective pronoun forms could also occur reflexively in Old English.

(8) No ic **me** an herewæsmun hnagran talige guþgeweorca,
not 1sg.NOM 1sg.DAT on prowess smaller think wardeeds

þonne Grendel **hine**
than Grendel 3sgM.ACC[7]

'By no means do I consider myself smaller in prowess and wardeeds than Grendel does himself' (*Beowulf* 677-8) [Gelderen 2000: 33][8]

[6] Mustanoja (1960: 125) notes that all 1ps and 2ps dual forms dissappeared during the 13th century.

[7] Key to the abbreviations used in the glosses: 1sg = first person singular pronoun, 3sgM = third person singular masculine pronoun, NOM = nominative case, DAT = dative case, ACC = accusative case.

[8] Primary sources are given in round brackets, secondary sources in square brackets. The full references for the primary sources of Old English and Middle English examples quoted from secondary sources are listed at the end of the bibliography.

3ps reflexives usually took the accusative form (*hine,* etc.), whereas 1ps and 2ps reflexives almost always surfaced in the dative form (*me, þe*, etc.) (Gelderen 2000: 43). With 3ps pronouns, the occurrence of dative forms coreferent with the subject was generally restricted to non-argument positions (9), where the use of a reflexive pronoun served to emphasise subject involvement (Gelderen 2000: 43; Keenan 1997: 3).

(9) forðæm hi **him** ondrædað ða frecenesse ðe hi
because 3pl.NOM 3pl.DAT fear the danger that 3pl.NOM
ne gesioð
not see
'because they fear (them) the danger that they do not see'
(*Pastoral Care* 433) [Keenan 1997: 3]

The preference for dative 1ps and 2ps forms in all reflexive contexts emphasises the marginal status of the 1ps and 2ps accusative forms in most OE texts. As we might expect, the reflexive use of accusative 1ps and 2ps is largely limited to manuscripts such as the *Riddles* and *The Vespasian Psalter*, where 1ps and 2ps accusative forms are generally common (Gelderen 2000: 46, 61).

At the end of the OE period, a number of phonological changes led to a dramatic increase in the syncretism found in the case morphology of nouns and adjectives (Allen 1995: 163f):[9]

(a) The distinction between high, mid, and low vowels disappeared in final unstressed syllables (and thus also in case suffixes); and in the 11th century even the front-back distinction was lost in this environment.
(b) Final /m/ was replaced with /n/ in unstressed syllables
(c) Final /n/ was lost in unstressed syllables.

These changes neutralised the remaining differences between the singular nominative and accusative inflections of weak nouns and adjectives, and ultimately

[9] Both Moore (1928: 240-243) and Allen (1995: 163f) note that the replacement of /m/ with /n/ in unstressed syllables appears to have preceded the loss of final /n/ in unstressed position. As Moore (1928: 244-247) points out, the chronological order between these consonant changes and the weakening of unstressed vowels is not entirely clear, although the written evidence seems to indicate that the complete loss of vowel distinctions in unstressed syllables more or less coincided with the loss of final /n/. According to Allen (1995: 163), evidence for the levelling of height distinctions between unstressed vowels can already be found in ninth century texts, which suggests that at least in some dialects, the earlier stages of vowel weakening were contemporaneous with the replacement of /m/ with /n/ in unstressed syllables.

led to the complete loss of the nominative-accusative distinction on nouns in the late 11th century (Allen 1995: 165).

1.2 Morphological case in Middle English (ME)

During the Middle English period, the remaining nominal case (and gender) inflections gradually disappeared, with only the genitive retained, predominantly as a marker of noun phrases that appear within another noun phrase (Allen 1995: 195). The original dative suffix *-e* of strong masculine and neuter nouns was largely restricted to objects of prepositions (Allen 1995: 176, 204).

We still find different case forms for the definite determiner, especially in the more conservative southern dialects, but even these varieties of ME show some levelling towards *Þe* in the singular and *Þa* in the plural. Where the original singular accusative *Þone* is still used, it has taken over the function of a generic object form. As with nouns and adjectives, there is no longer any evidence for a consistent distinction between dative and accusative forms (Allen 1995: 171f, 190f).

The dative/accusative distinction also disappeared from the pronominal paradigms during the ME period. Significantly, the distinction between dative and accusative case forms was lost at different times for different pronouns. These ϕ-related differences in the ME case system foreshadow the ϕ-related variation in the distribution of pronoun case forms in Present-Day English (cf. Chapter 7), and support the strong links between case and ϕ-feature agreement proposed in some formal approaches (e.g. Schütze 1997, Chomsky 2000; cf. Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion).[10]

As mentioned above, the distinction between dative and accusative 1ps and 2ps forms had already been lost during the OE period, when the dative forms *me, Þe, us, eow, unc,* and *inc* were extended to accusative contexts (7). For *wh*-pronouns, the dative/accusative distinction was neutralised on the dative form *whom* in the masculine/feminine paradigm, but on the nominative/accusative form *what* in the neuter paradigm (10).

[10] In keeping with general practice, I am using 'ϕ-features' as shorthand for person, number, and gender features.

(10) *wh*-pronoun paradigms in ME[11]
(Mustanoja 1960: 180-185, 194f, 199-201)

ME *wh*-pronoun	masculine & feminine	neuter
NOM	who, qua	what, quat
ACC	whom, quam	what, quat
DAT	whom, quam	what, quat

The changes in the 3ps paradigm happened at different times for the different 3ps pronouns and also varied between dialects (Allen 1995: 169-205; Kemenade 1987: 229-233): Southern dialects retained the dative/accusative distinction considerably longer than northern dialects, and we still find a difference between the dative and accusative forms of at least some pronouns in late 13th century texts from Kent. Southern English usage during the 12th and 13th centuries is exemplified by the paradigm for 3ps pronouns in the *Vices & Virtues* (11).

(11) 3ps pronominal paradigms in the *Vices & Virtues* (Southern England)
(Allen 1995: 189)

Vices & Virtues (c.1200)	3ps singular			3ps plural
	masculine	feminine	neuter	
NOM	he, hie	heo, hie, he	hit	hie, hi, he
ACC	hine (him)	hie, hes, his	hit	hes, his (hem)
GEN	his(e)	hire	his	here, her, heare
DAT	him	hire	him	hem, heom

As Allen (1995: 189) notes, the nominative/accusative distinction in the plural actually represents an increase in case marking distinctions when compared to OE (5). At the same time, the occasional extension of the 3sgM and 3pl datives *him* and *hem* to accusative contexts points to a weakening of the dative/accusative distinction, which is eventually lost in the early 14th century.

In the Northeast of England, the dative/accusative distinction is only in evidence up to the early 12th century (12). The scribe who wrote the First Continuation of the *Peterborough Chronicle* (c.1131), still uses the original 3sgM accusative *hine* alongside the dative *him* in accusative contexts. However, in the Second Continuation (written c.1154), *hine* has been completely replaced by *him*. The 3sgF and 3pl datives *hire* and *heom* have already spread to accusative contexts in the First Continuation, whereas for the 3sg neuter, the dative *him* has been lost

[11] According to Mustanoja (1960: 180), *qua, quam, quat* are the northern forms of the pronoun.

and the accusative *hit* has been extended to all dative contexts.[12] As in the Southern dialects, the OE syncretism between nominative and accusative plural forms has disappeared, but this time as a result of the extension of the dative 3pl form *heom* rather than the introduction of a distinct accusative form.

(12) 3ps pronominal paradigms in the *Peterborough Chronicle* (Northeast) (Allen 1995: 176; Kemenade 1987: 230f)

Peterborough Chronicle				
First Continuation (c.1131)		**3ps singular**		**3ps plural**
	masculine	**feminine**	**neuter**	
NOM	he	heo	hit	hi
ACC	him, hine	hire	hit	heom
DAT	him (hine)[13]	hire	hit	heom
Second Continuation (c.1154)		**3ps singular**		**3ps plural**
	masculine	**feminine**	**neuter**	
NOM	he	heo	hit	hi
ACC	him	hire	hit	heom
DAT	him	hire	hit	heom

It is also in the Northeast that we find the first recorded examples of the Scandinavian 3pl forms *they, them,* and *their* (13). The author of the *Ormulum*, a poem probably written just north of Peterborough in the late 12th century, consistently substituted the Scandinavian nominative *they* for the older *hi*, but used both English and Scandinavian forms in the genitive and the object case (Allen 1995: 179). In keeping with the general extension of dative forms to all objects, the borrowed Scandinavian dative *them* was used in both accusative and dative contexts (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 221).

[12] Allen (1995: 189, fn.30) suggests that a possible reason for the exceptional direction of the dative/accusative merger in the 3sg neuter paradigm was the replacement of the OE gender distinctions with a human/non-human distinction in ME. The extension of the 3sg neuter accusative *hit* to dative contexts helped retain the distinction between non-human 3sg neuter objects and human 3sgM objects (which had the form *him* after the loss of the dative/accusative distinction).

[13] Allen (1995: 176) points out that *hine* is generally limited to clear accusative contexts in the First Continuation, but she also notes two instances of *hine* in dative contexts, which could be seen as evidence that the scribe's command of the dative/accusative distinction was waning.

(13) Pronominal paradigm for 3pl in the *Ormulum* (Northeast) (Allen 1995: 179)

Ormulum (late 12th century)	**3ps plural**
NOM	they
ACC	heom, them
DAT	heom, them
GEN	hira, their

The complete loss of the dative/accusative distinction was probably the most influential change in ME case morphology, because it affected all nominal elements and had far-reaching consequences for the way in which case was assigned.

1.3 Lexical and structural case marking in the history of English

In Old English (OE), case could be assigned either structurally or lexically. While lexical case is specified in the lexical entries of certain verbs or prepositions,[14] structural case is assigned according to the grammatical relation and structural position of the noun phrase in question. As a consequence, syntactic processes like passivisation can affect structural case assignment, but do not have any bearing on lexically assigned case. The difference between structural and lexical case assignment in OE is most clearly seen in verbal passives, such as those given in (14b) and (15).

Like all highly transitive verbs (Allen 1995: 25), *ofslean* 'to slay, kill' occurs with an object in the structural accusative case (*hine*) when the sentence is active (14a). When the verb is passivised, the subject appears in the nominative case (*se cyning*) (14b).[15]

[14] Lexical case is also referred to as 'inherent' or 'quirky' case in the literature.

[15] Key to the abbreviations used in the glosses: 3pl = third person plural pronoun, 3sgM = third person singular masculine pronoun, NOM = nominative case, NOM/ACC = syncretic nominative and accusative form, ACC = accusative case, DAT = dative case, SG = singular, PL = plural, FEM = feminine, MASC = masculine.

(14) a. oþ þæt hie **hine** ofslægenne hæfdon
until *3pl.NOM/ACC* *3sgM.ACC* *slain* *had*
'until they had killed him'
(*Parker Chronicle* 48.4 (755)) [Denison 1993: 343]

b. þyslic wæs seo syn, þe **se** **cyning** fore
such *was* *the.SG.FEM.NOM* *sin* *that* *the.SG.MASC.NOM* *king* *for*
ofslegen wæs
slain *was*
'such was the sin for which the king was slain'
(*Bede* 3 16.228.5) [Denison 1993: 130]

The verb *deman* 'to judge', on the other hand, assigns a lexical dative to its direct object (*nanum men*), and also takes a dative subject in the passive (*him*) (15). Passives with lexically case-marked subjects are generally known as 'indirect passives', as opposed to the 'direct passive' exemplified in (14b).

(15) hi ne demað **nanum** **men**, ac **him** bið gedemed
3pl.NOM *not judge* *no.PL.DAT* *men.PL.DAT* *but* *3pl.DAT* *be.SG* *judged*
'They will not judge any men, but they will be judged.'[16]
(*Ælfric Homilies* XI, 369) [Allen 1995: 27]

According to Allen (1995: 25), many verbs that lexically case-marked their objects in OE could also appear with objects in the structural accusative case (e.g. *abelgan* 'to anger' occurred with both dative and accusative objects).[17]

Since arguments of prepositions are not normally subject to operations comparable to passivisation, the nature of the case assigned by a given preposition is much harder to determine than the nature of the case assigned by a verb. Nevertheless, prepositions are generally assumed to have assigned lexical case in

[16] Note that the lexically case-marked dative subject *him* does not trigger agreement on the verb *be*. It appears that lexically case-marked noun phrases generally failed to trigger verbal agreement in Old English, even when they exhibited clear subject properties and preceded the verb.

[17] See Mitchell (1985: 529) for a similar observation. Mitchell (1985: 455-464) also provides a list of verbs that occur with lexically case-marked objects which illustrates that many verbs in this category may take either lexically case-marked objects or objects in the structural accusative case. As both Mitchell (1985: 449-454) and Allen (1995: 25f) point out, the case-marking possibilities of Old English verbs are closely linked to the semantic properties of the verb, and the alternation between lexically case-marked objects and structurally case-marked objects often correlates with an alternation in meaning. However, the fact remains that many lexically case-marking verbs were already able to occur with accusative objects in at least some of their uses (or else coexisted with homonymous verbs that required objects in the structural accusative).

Old English, because the case of prepositional objects varied with the preposition and/or its interpretation (cf. Gelderen 2000: 62; Mitchell 1985: 496-499).[18]

These case differences between objects of different prepositions seem to have been lost during the Early Middle English period. In the *Peterborough Chronicle* (and also in the later *Ormulum*), any nominal objects of prepositions could optionally occur with the OE dative suffix *-e*, regardless of the nature of the preposition (Allen 1995: 176, 180). As Allen (1995: 176) points out, this suggests that prepositions assigned structural dative rather than lexical case in Early Middle English.

For verbs, the option of lexical case assignment to objects and passive subjects disappeared once the accusative/dative distinction had been lost around the 13th century (Allen 1995: 219f, 370, 375f). Interestingly, the loss of lexical object case not only affected verbs that selected dative objects, but also verbs that assigned genitive case to their objects, even though nouns and pronouns retained distinct genitive case morphology in all dialects (Allen 1995: 195, 218). As Allen points out, the loss of genitive objects is indicative of the general shift towards structural case assignment during ME, which is also evident in the earlier development of structural dative case assignment to objects of prepositions (1995: 176, 180, 195, 218).

However, lexical case assignment was not limited to verbal and prepositional objects and passive subjects in OE. Allen (1995: 96-121) presents convincing evidence that the preverbal dative experiencers in sentences like (16) have subject status,[19] even though the verb generally surfaces in the unmarked 3sg form, or agrees with the postverbal nominative target of emotion (Allen 1995: 142).

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[18] For example, prepositions like *over* generally took a dative object when they received a locative interpretation, but an accusative object when they received a path interpretation (cf. Mitchell 1985: 496-498).

[19] Compare the Icelandic case marking patterns discussed in Yip et al. (1987). The availability of the preverbal dative experiencer construction in Old English was to some extent linked to the semantic properties of the verb. Preposing of the dative experiencer was most common when the experiencer was a pronoun and the target of emotion was a noun (Allen 1995: 109). A preposed dative experiencer was therefore most likely to be found with verbs like *lician*, which favoured topical experiencers and non-human targets of emotion. Allen notes that verbs of this type typically emphasise the role of the experiencer in the event, whereas verbs that do not exhibit the preposed dative experiencer construction (e.g. *(ge)cweman*) tend to focus on the role of the target of emotion as the cause of the event (1995: 146f).

(16) þæt þe wel licode þæra gewrita andgit
that 2sg.DAT well liked the.PL.GEN writings.GEN meaning
'that you liked the content of the writing'
(*COE* Ælet 6 (Wulfgeat) 4) [Allen 1995: 109][20]

According to Allen (1995: 104-111), dative experiencers with verbs like *lician* not only occur more frequently in preverbal position than indisputable objects, but are also attested in contexts where topicalised objects are neither necessary nor expected. What is more, pronominal experiencers of verbs that license preverbal dative experiencers, are able to occur postverbally only in those contexts where we also find nominative pronominal subjects, namely in clauses introduced by certain adverbs and negatives, but not in clauses introduced by a topicalised noun phrase or PP (Allen 1995: 107; cf. Section 10.3.1 for a more detailed discussion of postverbal pronominal subjects in Old English).

Further evidence for the subject status of preverbal dative experiencers comes from their ability to control Coordinate Subject Deletion to a greater extent than we would expect of ordinary dative objects (Allen 1995: 117), and from the fact that expletive subjects (*hit* or *pær*) rarely cooccurred with preverbal dative experiencers, even though they were already strongly favoured with weather verbs and verbs that took sentential complements (Allen 1995: 117-121; Kemenade 1997: 351 n.18).[21]

The subjecthood of preverbal dative experiencers may explain why lexical case-marking was retained longer in the preverbal experiencer constructions than on objects and passive subjects (Allen 1995: 220, 224, 231). While there was no longer any morphological evidence for a distinction between lexical dative and structural accusative objects after the loss of the dative/accusative distinction in the pronominal paradigm, there would still have been a clear morphological distinction between lexical dative and structural nominative subjects. Although nouns lost the nominative/dative distinction during the ME period, personal pronouns distinguish between nominative and objective case even today. Since the experiencer in preposed dative experiencer constructions was typically a pronoun, there would have been sufficient morphological evidence to trigger the acquisition of lexical

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[20] The full details of the primary sources for examples originally taken from the Microfiche Concordance of Old English (*COE*) can be found in the guide to the concordance.

[21] If preverbal dative experiencer constructions involved a nonovert *pro* subject (cf. Kemenade 1997: 334f), we would expect to find a similar preference for nonovert *pro* subjects with weather verbs and verbs that take clausal complements in Old English. Since does not appear to be the case, it seems more plausible to assume that the dative experiencer constructions in question already contain an overt subject, namely the dative experiencer.

case marking (Allen 1995: 100f, 109, 111, 231). What is more, the dative case on experiencer subjects 'was useful in signalling the non-agentivity of the subject' (Allen 1995: 446).

The eventual replacement of preposed dative experiencers with nominative experiencers in all but a few frozen expressions during the 15th century is best seen as the last step towards the complete predominance of structural case assignment in English (Allen 1995: 289).

1.4 Morphological changes in the pronominal paradigm during the Early Modern English period

The loss of lexical case marking for experiencer subjects meant that by the start of the Early Modern English (EModE) period, the case system of English had basically reached its present-day form. The only morphological change yet to happen was the drastic simplification of the 2ps paradigm. At the start of the Early Modern English period, we still find distinct 2ps singular and plural forms, as well as a consistent morphological distinction between the nominative (NOM) and the general objective (OBJ) case (17). However, Kjellmer (1986: 446), drawing on the OED entry for *you*, argues that '*you* began to be used for *ye* between 1300 and 1400 and replaced it in general use by 1600'.

(17) Pronominal paradigm for 2ps in Early Modern English and Present-Day English
(Allen 1995: 210; Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 129, 270; Priestley 1761: 91; Wallis 1765 [1653]: 98)

Early Modern English	**2ps singular**	**2ps plural**
NOM	thou	ye
OBJ	thee	you
intermediate stage suggested by Wallis, Priestley and Jespersen & Haislund	**2ps singular**	**2ps plural**
NOM	thou, you	ye
OBJ	thee, you	you, ye
Present-Day English	**2ps singular**	**2ps plural**
NOM	you	you
OBJ	you	you

Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 265-268) suggest that the levelling of the nominative/objective case distinction may in part have been due to phonetic influences. Since the 2ps nominative and objective case forms differed only in their vowels, the phonetic distinction between *thou* and *thee* and also the distinction between *ye* and *you* would already have been neutralised in spoken English when the 2ps forms appeared in an unstressed position.[22]

According to Mustanoja (1960: 125), the use of *ȝe* rather than *ȝou* as the object of *preie* in (18) may be due to the lack of stress on the pronoun.

(18) y preie ȝe, seie ȝe to me
1sg.NOM pray 2pl.NOM say 2pl.NOM to 1sg.OBJ
'I pray you, you say to me'
(*Pecock Repressor*, ed. Ch. Babington, RBMAS 19, 1860: 86)
[Mustanoja 1960: 125]

[22] According to Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 270), Shakespeare and Marlowe sometimes use *you* in emphatic position and *ye* as the unstressed form. Wales (1996: 89) suggests that *ye* was used as an unemphatic objective 2pl form, and Jespersen & Haislund cite Mason's *English Grammar* (p.49) as noting that Spenser uses *you* as the emphatic nominative and *ye* as the unemphatic nominative.

Mustanoja (1960: 124f) also notes that the 2sg objective form *þe* appears as an 'unstressed form' of the 2sg nominative *thou* in a number of Middle English texts, 'especially in connection with auxiliary verbs' and 'in enclisis' (19).

(19) wy seiste so
why say-2sg.OBJ so
'why do you say so?'
(*Robert of Gloucester* 8972, MS B; *seistou* in other manuscripts)
[Mustanoja 1960: 125]

Interestingly, we find a similar trend with 1pl pronouns. Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 256) observe that unstressed 1pl subjects that follow a fronted auxiliary verb may surface as *(u)s* rather than *we* from the 15th century onwards (20).

(20) a. hens must vs flee (*The Towneley Plays*, ed. England, EETS 1897: 31)
b. How shal's get it? (Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*: IV.iii.408)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 256f]

Since *(u)s* cannot be plausibly analysed as a phonetically reduced form of the corresponding nominative, the occurrence of sentences like (20) indicates that structural case is weaker for subjects that occur after fronted finite verbs than for subjects that precede the finite verb. In Section 3.3.2, I will argue that the weakening of structural case in this context is due to the lack of an overt specifier-head relationship between the subject and the finite verb, which means that the subject position is no longer necessarily analysed as a nominative case position.

While the weakening of structural case in postverbal subject position would be expected to have a bearing on the distribution of the case forms of all pronouns, only the 2ps paradigm could have been affected by the availability of alternative structural analyses for imperatives with a subject-related pronoun in postverbal position. As Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 258-261) point out, three types of subject-related 2ps pronouns could follow the verb in Early Modern English imperatives: postverbal subject pronouns, which bore nominative case (21); non-argument pronouns associated with heightened subject involvement (cf. Section 1.1), which bore the objective case (22); and object pronouns coreferent with the subject, which also bore the objective case (23).

(21) sit **thou** by my bedde [*thou* = postverbal subject pronoun; nominative case]
(Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 2*: IV. v. 182)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 259]

(22) dreed **thee** noght [*thee* = non-argument pronoun; objective case]
(Chaucer, *Legend of good women*, in Skeat's six-volume edition: 1742)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 259]

(23) set **thee** down [*thee* = object pronoun coreferent with subject; objective case]
(Shakespeare, *Love's labour's lost*: IV. iii. 4)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 259]

Although the status of the pronoun is reasonably clear from the context and the nature of the verb in examples (21)-(23), the original difference in meaning between sentences with a non-argument reflexive (24a) and sentences without a non-argument reflexive (24b) had virtually disappeared by the Early Modern English period.

(24) a. I fear me. [*me* = non-argument pronoun]
b. I fear.

As a result, many intransitive imperative verbs could occur equally plausibly with a nominative postverbal subject pronoun as with an objective non-argument reflexive, no matter what the context. And in the absence of any clear meaning differences, the nominative and objective 2ps forms would have seemed completely interchangeable in many imperatives (25)-(26).

(25) a. fare **thou** well (Shakespeare, *The tempest*: V. 318)
b. Far **thee** well (Shakespeare, *Macbeth*: IV. iii. 34)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 259]

(26) a. fare **ye** well (Shakespeare, *The merchant of Venice*: I. i. 58)
b. fare **you** well (Shakespeare, *The merchant of Venice*: II. vii. 773)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 259]

Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 269f) propose that the eventual extension of the 2pl object form *you* to both singular and plural nominatives may also have been influenced by the phonological similarities between *you* and the 2sg nominative *thou* (cf. also Wales 1996: 89). They note that the earliest instances of *you* in a nominative context appear to refer to single individuals, and that 17th century

grammarians draw attention to an opposition between singular *you* and plural *ye* in colloquial English. Thus both Wallis (1765 [1653]: 98) and Priestley (1761: 9 note m) observe that *you* is commonly used when addressing a single person, but *ye* can only have a plural referent (27)-(28).

(27) Wallis' observations on *you* and *ye*

Notandum item apud nos morem obtinuisse [...] dum quis alium alloquitur, singularem licet, numerium tamen pluralem adhibendi; verum tunc *you* dicimus, non *ye*.[23] (Wallis 1765 [1653]: 98)

(28) Example discussed by Priestley (1761: 9 note m)

a. You (= 2pl) are reading.
   You (= 2sg) are reading.
b. Ye (= 2pl) are reading.
   * Ye (= 2sg) are reading.

In Chapter 8, I will propose that phonological similarities between certain pronoun forms have contributed in a similar way to the emergence of an alternative classification of 1sg, 3sg, 1pl and 3pl case forms. This alternative grouping of the pronoun forms will be argued to play an important role in the variability of pronoun case in Present-Day English.

As I will demonstrate in Chapters 3 and 4, the pronoun case variation found in Present-Day English occurs primarily in strong pronoun contexts. Setting aside the changes in the 2ps paradigm and the occurrence of *us* after fronted auxiliary verbs, we find very little variation or change in the distribution of pronoun case forms in weak pronoun contexts from the Early Modern English period onwards. Since the demise of dative experiencer subjects, lone pronouns in the (preverbal) subject position of a finite declarative clause consistently surface in the nominative forms *I, he, she, we, they*, while lone pronominal objects of verbs consistently surface in the objective forms *me, him, her, us, them* (Allen 1995: 210). Only the invariant 2ps and 3sg neuter (3sgN) forms *you* and *it* occur both in weak subject and in weak object position (29).

This consistency of case choice in weak pronoun contexts indicates that, unlike the changes in the 2ps paradigm, the reanalysis of 1sg, 3sg, 1pl, and 3pl case forms is confined to the strong pronoun series.

[23] 'Note also that it is customary with us [...] to use the the plural number in addressing someone, even when the singular would be appropriate; but then we say *you*, not *ye*.'

(29) The distribution of weak pronoun forms in Present-Day English[24]

	1sg	3sgM	3sgF	1pl	3pl	2ps	3sgN
preverbal subject of finite clause	I	he	she	we	they	you	it
object of verb	me	him	her	us	them	you	it

Although the remainder of this thesis focuses on the analysis of pronoun case variation in strong pronoun contexts, the distribution of weak pronoun forms in Present-Day English will feature prominently in Chapters 2 and 5. Chapter 2 discusses some of the more influential formal approaches to case; and Chapter 5 takes a closer look at the weak/strong distinction in the English pronoun system. As we will see, theoretical discussions of case assignment tend to concentrate on the case of lone, unmodified noun phrases in canonical subject or object position. Since these positions are associated with the licensing of weak pronouns in English, the distribution of weak pronoun forms is captured rather well in formal approaches to case.

[24] According to Wales (1996: 15), the 3sgF nominative *she* was introduced in the Late Middle English period. Wales also notes that the source of this form is 'much disputed'.

2 Formal approaches to case

Table of chapter contents

2.0 Introduction

Much of current syntactic theory assumes that despite the lack of overt morphological case distinctions on nouns, Modern English still has a healthy case system. The case forms of personal pronouns are often treated as the only remaining overt manifestations of this underlying case system, and the distribution of lone, unmodified pronoun forms (1) tends to be viewed as evidence that subjects of finite clauses receive nominative case, objects of verbs and prepositions receive accusative/objective case, and possessive noun phrases receive genitive case (e.g. McCreight 1988: 5f, 9f; Chomsky 1993; Pollard & Sag 1994; Burzio 2000).[1]

(1) a. **I/he/she/we/they** welcomed Tom. (subject - nominative case)
b. Tom welcomed **me/him/her/us/them**. (object of V - objective case)
c. Tom left without **me/him/her/us/them**. (object of P - objective case)
d. **my/his/her/our/their** house (possessive - genitive case)

[1] Since Modern English lacks a morphological difference between dative and accusative case forms, I will refer to the case found in object and prepositional complement position as 'objective'.

The various formal accounts of case differ primarily in the relative importance they accord to particular syntactic configurations in the context of case assignment. While some approaches assume that case assignment is driven entirely by the semantic form/argument structure of a predicate, and is therefore independent of word order, many others argue that case assignment can proceed only when the noun phrase appears in a particular structural configuration with the case-assigning head.

This chapter outlines the most important assumptions and case predictions of argument-based and configurational approaches to case, and presents evidence that we need to distinguish two types of structural case marking in order to account for the case of lone, unmodified pronouns in Modern English: Argument Case, which is determined by structural linking between cases and arguments of a predicate; and Positional Case, which is checked in a spec-head configuration at Spell-Out.

The structural linking approach that forms the basis of Argument Case is introduced in Section 2.1. The configurational approach that forms the basis of Positional Case is discussed in Section 2.2. The most important predictions of Argument Case and Positional Case are summarised in Section 2.3, which also introduces an additional Default Case constraint, and outlines the interaction and relative importance of the three case constraints in Modern English.

2.1 Case and argument structure

Kiparsky (1997) and Wunderlich (1997) offer the most detailed recent explorations of the links between case and argument structure. Both argue that the case of structural (= noun phrase) arguments is determined at a semantic rather than syntactic level of representation, and assume that structural linking between arguments and cases relies on shared structural features. Their approaches differ mainly in the detailed structure of the semantic levels and associated representations, and in the features assigned to different positions on the argument hierarchy. To avoid confusion, I will adhere to Wunderlich's (1997: 48) feature system throughout this thesis, even when illustrating arguments put forward by Kiparsky.[2]

[2] See Wunderlich (1997: 48 fn.15) for a discussion of the differences between Kiparsky's and Wunderlich's feature systems.

2.1.1 Case assignment by structural linking

Wunderlich (1997: 32, 46-50) proposes that structural (= noun phrase) arguments of a predicate receive case through structural linking in the θ-structure (TS), an interface level between Semantic Form (SF) and Phrase Structure (PS). How many structural arguments can occur with a particular predicate is determined by the lexical category and the SF representation of a predicate. In English, adjectives can license only one structural argument, at the most; nouns and prepositions are able to license up to two structural arguments; and verbs can licence up to three structural arguments.[3] The morphological case of a structural argument depends on its position in the argument hierarchy, which is determined by the SF representation of a predicate and its arguments. At TS, the argument hierarchy position of every structural argument is encoded with the binary features [± higher] and [± lower]. These features are intended to be interpreted as follows:

(2) Wunderlich's (1997: 48) system of structural features and their interpretation

[+ higher] = there is a higher argument
[- higher] = there is no higher argument
[+ lower] = there is a lower argument
[- lower] = there is no lower argument

In a set of three arguments, the highest structural argument will have the feature-specification [- higher, + lower], the lowest structural argument will have the feature-specification [+ higher, - lower], and the intermediate argument will have the feature-specification [+ higher, + lower].

I would like to propose that three argument cases are available for structural linking in Modern English, namely, nominative (NOM), objective (OBJ), and genitive case (GEN). Nominative case has the feature specification [- higher] and occurs with all types of predicates. Objective and genitive case are not specified for any features, but objective case is available only to [- N] predicates (i.e. verbs and prepositions), and genitive case is available only to [+ N] predicates (i.e. nouns

[3] If bare noun phrase adverbs are treated as arguments of the verb (cf. Larson 1985: 605f, 620; Przepiórkowski 1998: 239f), the number of structural arguments a verb can license will be even higher.

and adjectives).[4] Since adjectives are unable to license more than one structural argument (which is either identified with an argument of a higher predicate, or linked to nominative case because it has the structural feature [- higher]), genitive case only ever shows up on arguments of nouns.[5]

The feature-based structural linking between arguments and cases is demonstrated in (3), which illustrates case-assignment to the structural arguments of double-object *give* in an active sentence in Modern English.

[4] Although Wunderlich (1997:48) and Kiparsky (1997: 476f) assume that NOM is the structural case not specified for any structural features, I would like to argue that in Modern English the OBJ is the underspecified structural case, and that NOM is specified for the feature [- higher]. The differences between my proposal (which focuses on Modern English) and the proposals put forward by Kiparsky and Wunderlich (which are influenced by Old English and German) could be seen to reflect differences between the Modern English case system and the case systems of German and Old English. Kyle Johnson (p.c.) suggests that the nominative is the default case in German, but that the objective is the default case in English. It seems plausible that the default case of a language should correspond to the least specified structural case in the θ-structure of verbal predicates.

[5] Note that only arguments realised as noun phrases count as structural arguments in the proposed approach (cf. Wunderlich 1997: 38-42, 46f). Arguments of a predicate that are realised as PPs are not structural for the purposes of structural linking. This means that in APs such as *proud of his achievement*, the noun phrase following *of* is not a structural argument of *proud*. Similarly, *the documents* is not a structural argument of *destruction* in the DP *the destruction of the documents*.

(3) Example illustrating structural argument-case linking for active double-object *give* in Modern English (cf. Wunderlich 1997)[6]

She gave me the keys.			(example sentence)
give [x CAUSE [BECOME [y POSS z]]]			(Semantic Form)[7]
λx	λy	λz	(structural arguments at TS)
[- higher] [+ lower]	[+ higher] [+ lower]	[+ higher] [- lower]	(structural features of args)[8]
NOM [- higher]	OBJ [ ]		(argument cases associated with [- N] predicates in Modern English, and their structural features)

As can be seen from (3), argument-case linking obeys the Specificity Principle (4).

(4) Specificity Principle (cf. Wunderlich 1997: 49; Kiparsky 1997: 477)

Each argument is linked with the most specific case compatible with its structural features.

That is, an argument with the feature [- higher] will be linked to the nominative case (NOM), because the nominative is specified for [- higher], whereas the objective (OBJ) is not. Arguments with the feature [+ higher], on the other hand, can only link to the objective case, because their feature specification is incompatible with the [- higher] feature of the nominative.

The structural nature of the argument cases assigned in (3) becomes evident under passivisation. As mentioned in Section 1.3., lexical case is retained under passivisation, but structural case is lost. In Wunderlich's approach, passivisation

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[6] Wunderlich's (1997) SF representations of verbal predicates also include a referential situational argument (s). I have omitted this referential situational argument from my SF and TS representations, because it does not interact with the individual arguments of a verb, and therefore has no bearing on their feature specifications.

[7] In the approach advocated by Wunderlich (1997: 38-43), the bracketed SF representation of double-object *give* corresponds to a binary lexical tree diagram representing the logical types of its constituents and the hierarchical relations between them. For example, POSS is a predicate of type <e,<e,t>> because it takes two entities (*y* and *z* in (3)) to form a proposition (t). Whether an individual argument (i.e. an argument of type e) is structural at TS is assumed to depend on the c-command relationships between the individual arguments in the lexical tree.

[8] args = arguments

removes the highest structural argument from the TS hierarchy before structural linking can apply.[9] As a result, the following argument will bear the feature [- higher], and will be linked to the nominative case (5).

(5) Example illustrating structural argument-case linking for passive double-object *give* in Modern English (cf. Wunderlich 1997)

I was given the keys.			(example sentence)
give [x CAUSE [BECOME [y POSS z]]]			(Semantic Form)
λx	λy	λz	(structural arguments at TS)
	λy	λz	(outcome of **passivisation**)
	[- higher] [+ lower]	[+ higher] [- lower]	(structural features of remaining arguments)
	NOM [- higher]	OBJ [ ]	(argument cases associated with [- N] predicates in Modern English, and their structural features)

While the features of structurally case-marked arguments are determined solely in relation to other arguments on the argument hierarchy, the structural features of lexically case-marked arguments are (partially) pre-specified in the lexical entry of a predicate. As (6) illustrates, this lexical specification of the features of one argument can affect the assignment of structural features and case to the remaining arguments of the predicate.

[9] Note that even though the argument removed from the TS hierarchy is no longer structural (and thus only able to be realised as a PP), it is still present as the highest argument in the SF representation of *give*. The presence of the agent argument in the SF of passives could explain why the nonstuctural agent argument appears to be able to control a PRO subject in sentences such as (i).

(i) The boat was sunk (by its owner$_i$) [PRO$_i$ to collect the insurance money].

I would like to thank Liz Pearce (p.c.) for drawing my attention to this issue.

(6) Example illustrating the effect of lexical feature-specification on structural feature and case assignment for the experiencer verb *lician* in Old English (cf. Section 1.3)[10]

him	**gelicade**	**hire**	**þeawas**	(example sentence)
3sgM.DAT	*liked*	*her*	*virtues.NOM/ACC*	

'He liked her virtues / Her virtues pleased him'
(*COE* Chron D (Classen-Harm) 1067.1.35)
[Allen 1995: 142][11]

lician [x LIKE y]		(Semantic Form)
λx	λy	(structural arguments at TS)
[+ higher]		(structural features specified in the lexical entry of *lician*)
	[- higher]	(structural features added by default)[12]
[+ lower]	[-lower]	(structural features encoding the position of the arguments in the argument hierarchy)
DAT	NOM	(argument cases available in Old English and their structural features)[13]
[+ higher]	[ ]	
[+ lower]		

[10] My argument-case linking analysis for *lician* is based on Wunderlich's (1997: 52) analysis of the German experiencer verb *gefallen*, which appears to have the same argument structure properties as *lician* (cf. Allen 1995: 141). As noted by Kate Kearns (p.c.), the assumption that *x* occupies a higher argument structure position than *y* in [x LIKE y], receives support from Wechsler's (1995: 35ff) Notion Rule. The Notion Rule prohibits any semantic representations where the lower argument of a predicate has a notion of the higher argument, but not vice versa (Wechsler 1995: 36, 47).

[11] Primary sources are given in round brackets, secondary sources in square brackets. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the full details of primary sources for examples originally taken from the Microfiche Concordance of Old English (*COE*) can be found in the guide to the concordance.

[12] When there are only two arguments, they cannot both be [+ higher].

[13] As mentioned in footnote 4, I am assuming that Old English and Modern English have different feature-specifications for verb-related argument cases.

Both Wunderlich and Kiparsky focus on verbal predicates in their analyses, but the structural case linking approach can also be extended to nominal, prepositional, and adjectival predicates.[14]

Non-verbal predicate types differ from verbal predicates in that they typically function as arguments of a higher predicate.[15] Since the highest structural argument of a dependent predicate tends to undergo θ-identification with an argument of its host, structural linking associated with non-verbal predicates often affects only the lower argument(s) of such a predicate (cf. Higginbotham 1985: 564; Wunderlich 1997: 34). I am assuming that θ-identification of the highest argument does not lead to a change in the features of the remaining arguments on the argument hierarchy. This means that all of the lower structural arguments will have the feature specification [+ higher], and will link to the objective or genitive case (depending on the lexical category of the predicate).

The example in (7) illustrates how θ-identification and structural linking apply to the arguments of the preposition *to* in a sentence where the prepositional predicate functions as an argument of the verb *run*. The SF representation of the prepositional predicate follows suggestions by Jolly (1993: 289).

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[14] See Wunderlich's (1997: 48 n.16) comment that '[s]tructural case linking extends to prepositions and nouns (with genitive)'.

[15] Verbal predicates can obviously also function as arguments of a higher predicate (i), but unlike non-verbal predicates, they readily stand alone (ii).

(i) We expected [him to give her the keys]. We saw [her leave].

(ii) He gave her the keys. She left.

Like Wunderlich (1997: 33f), I assume that this independence of verbal predicates is due to the presence of a referential situational argument in the SF representation of a verb, which is able to interact with functional categories such as tense.

(7) Example illustrating structural argument-case linking for the preposition *to* in Modern English, where the prepositional predicate functions as an argument of the verb *run*

She ran to him.	(example sentence)
[[x RUN] & [BECOME [x AT y]]]	(combined SF of *run* and *to*)
λx λx λy	(structural arguments at TS)
└──────┘	(θ-identification between the external argument of *to* and the external argument of *run*)
λy	(remaining structural arguments of *to*)
[+ higher] [- lower]	(structural features of args)
NOM OBJ [- higher] [ ]	(argument cases associated with [- N] predicates in Modern English, and their structural features)

The availability of nominative case for structural arguments of non-verbal as well as verbal predicates is highlighted by the occurrence of nominative pronouns in absolutive and independent small clauses (8)-(10).

(8) Absolutive small clauses with a prepositional predicate

a. A dead man, and [I by]
(Richard B. Sheridan, *Dramatic works*, Tauchnitz ed.: 333)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 374]

b. to bolt with the daughter of an old friend, and [she only just out of the schoolroom]
(William Somerset Maugham, *Plays*, Tauchnitz ed.: 4.289)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 240]

(9) Independent and absolutive small clauses with a nominal predicate

a. [**She** a beauty]! I should as soon call her mother a wit
(Jane Austen, *Pride and prejudice*, London 1894 [1813]: 333)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

b. he writes essays like a polished gentleman of the world, and [**he** a round-faced cherub barely out of school]
(Rose Macaulay, *Told by an idiot*, London 1923: 94)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 240]

(10) Absolutive small clauses with an adjectival predicate

a. [**they** dead], two men only would remain
(Anthony Hope, *The prisoner of Zenda*, London 1894: 227)
[Jespersen 1946: 57]

b. the tears they often saw upon his face, half wondering to see them too and [**he** so pleased and happy]
(Anthony Hope, *The prisoner of Zenda*, London 1894: 227)
[Jespersen 1946: 57]

In (8)-(10), the non-verbal predicates do not function as arguments of a higher predicate. This means, that their highest structural argument is unable to undergo θ-identification, and remains available for argument-case linking (11).

(11) Example illustrating structural argument-case linking for the independent nominal predicate *beauty* in Modern English

She a beauty!	(example sentence)
beauty [x BEAUTY]	(Semantic Form)
λx	(structural arguments at TS)
[- higher] [- lower]	(structural features of args)
NOM GEN [- higher] [ ]	(argument cases associated with [+ N] predicates in Modern English, and their structural features)

Nouns differ from prepositions and adjectives in that their highest argument is referential. In Wunderlich's approach, referential arguments interact with functional categories to determine 'the anchoring of a linguistic expression in the

external world' (1997: 33f). This means that the referential individual argument of a noun may be θ-bound by a noun-related functional category such as D, just like the referential situational argument of a verb may be bound by a verb-related functional category such as T (cf. Higginbotham 1985: 56; Wunderlich 1997: 33f). θ-binding prevents an argument from being structurally realised, but like θ-identification, it has no bearing on the feature specification of the remaining arguments.[16]

The SF representation relevant for noun-related argument-case linking comes from the qualia structure of a noun (cf. Pustejovsky 1995). Pustejovsky (1995: 85-87) argues that qualia structure specifies those aspects of a word's meaning that constrain the interpretation of other words in the same syntactic environment. He distinguishes four qualia (12), whose values are expressed in terms of predicate relations (Pustejovsky 1995: 76-78, 85f).

(12) The four qualia distinguished by Pustejovsky (1995: 76, 85f)

(a) CONSTITUTIVE: the relation between an object and its constituent parts
(b) FORMAL: properties that distinguish an object in a larger domain
(c) TELIC: purpose and function of the object
(d) AGENTIVE: factors involved in an object's origin or 'bringing about'

A simplified qualia structure for the noun *novel* is given in (13).

(13)
$$\left(\begin{array}{l} \textbf{novel} \\ \text{QUALIA} = \left(\begin{array}{l} \text{CONSTITUTIVE} = \textbf{hold}\ (x,y) \\ \text{FORMAL} = \textbf{book}\ (x) \\ \text{TELIC} = \textbf{read}\ (w,x.y),\ \textbf{possess}\ (v,x) \\ \text{AGENTIVE} = \textbf{write}\ (u,x.y) \end{array}\right) \end{array}\right)$$

where the arguments are restricted to the following types:

x: physical object
y: narrative
w, v, u: animate individual
and the dotted type x.y combines the properties of x and y
(cf. Pustejovsky 1995: 78, 100f)

[16] Note that my treatment of referential individual arguments of nouns does not entirely correspond to the approach advocated by Wunderlich. While Wunderlich (1997: 34) argues that the referential argument of a noun does not participate in structural linking, I am assuming that the individual referential argument of a noun is able to undergo structural linking or θ-identification if it is not θ-bound.

In Pustejovsky's (1995: 101-103) approach, the different qualia compete for projection into the syntax, and only a subset can be projected at any given time. I would like to argue that the FORMAL quale provides the referential argument of a noun, and is therefore obligatorily projected. The possible interpretations of the genitive pronoun in a phrase like *his novel* suggest that an additional structural argument could come from either the TELIC or the AGENTIVE quale.

If the AGENTIVE quale is the source of the structural argument, the genitive pronoun will be interpreted as the author of the novel (14).[17]

(14) **his novel**	(example phrase)
[x BOOK] ∧ [[u WRITE y] & [BECOME [x EXIST]]]	(Semantic Form resulting from the projection of FORMAL and AGENTIVE qualia)
λx λu	(structural args at TS)

If the TELIC quale is the source of the structural argument, then the genitive pronoun will be interpreted either as the reader, or as the person who possesses the novel (15).

(15) **his novel**	(example phrase)
[x BOOK] ∧ [w READ x.y] **or** [x BOOK] ∧ [w POSS x]	(Semantic Form resulting from the projection of FORMAL and TELIC qualia)
λx λw	(structural args at TS)

[17] As discussed in footnote 7, Wunderlich (1997: 38-43) assumes that the c-command relationships between individual arguments in the lexical tree of a predicate determine which of the arguments are structural. It appears that for nominal predicates, an individual argument will be structural only if it c-commands all other individual arguments in a projected quale. Thus, *x* is structural in (14) and (15) because it is the only argument in the FORMAL quale; *u* is structural in (14) because it c-commands *y* and *x* in the AGENTIVE quale; and *w* is structural in (15) because it c-commands *x.y* or *y* in the TELIC quale.

For event nouns like *destruction*, the projection of the AGENTIVE quale will yield the 'active' version (16), and the projection of the TELIC quale will yield the 'passive' version (17).

(16) **his** destruction of the documents (active)

(17) **their** destruction (by enemy agents) (passive)

In the 'active' version, which is based on the projection of the AGENTIVE quale, the agent of the event is realised as a structural argument and linked with genitive case (18).[18]

(18) Example illustrating structural argument-case linking for the 'active' version of the event noun *destruction* in Modern English

his destruction of the documents		(example phrase)
[x DESTRUCTION] ∧ [y CAUSE [BECOME [z NOT EXIST]]]		(Semantic Form)
λx	λy	(structural args at TS)
	λy	(outcome of θ-binding)
	[+ higher] [- lower]	(structural features of remaining args)
	|	
NOM [- higher]	GEN [ ]	(argument cases associated with [+ N] predicates in Modern English and their structural features)

[18] As mentioned in footnote 5, only arguments realised as noun phrases count as structural arguments in Wunderlich's (1997: 38-42, 46f) approach. Arguments of a predicate that are realised as PPs are not structural for the purposes of structural linking. Since *the documents* appears as the complement of the preposition *of* in (16) and (18), it is not a structural argument of the event noun *destruction* in these examples.

In the 'passive' version, which is based on the projection of the TELIC quale, the theme of the event is realised as a structural argument (19).

(19) Example illustrating structural argument-case linking for the 'passive' version of the noun *destruction* in Modern English

their destruction (by enemy agents)		(example phrase)
[x DESTRUCTION] ∧ [BECOME [y NOT EXIST]]		(Semantic Form)
λx	λy	(structural args at TS)
	λy	(outcome of θ-binding)
	[+ higher] [- lower]	(structural features of remaining args)
	|	
NOM [- higher]	GEN [ ]	(argument cases associated with [+ N] predicates in Modern English and their structural features)

A structural linking approach to case is thus able to deal not only with case assignment to arguments of verbal predicates, but also with case assignment to the arguments of nouns, prepositions, and adjectives. Argument-case linking can even be extended to bare noun phrase adverbials, provided we follow suggestions by Larson (1985: 605f, 620) and Przepiórkowski (1998) that such adverbials should be treated as optional structural arguments of the verb, and occupy the lowest positions on the argument hierarchy.[19]

However, some instances of case marking in Modern English would appear to be influenced by factors other than the position of an argument on the argument hierarchy of a given predicate. Two examples of case marking that do not seem to arise from structural linking are discussed in the next section.

[19] See Przepiórkowski (1998: 239f) for further references and evidence from languages other than English that noun phrase adverbials should be included in the argument hierarchy.

2.1.2 Instances of case marking not predictable from structural linking

The shortcomings of a strict structural linking approach to case assignment are particularly evident in Poss-*ing* gerunds (20), and in constructions involving dependent predicates where θ-identification with an argument of the host does not seem plausible (21).

(20) You must excuse [**my** telling **you**]
(Charles Dickens, *Our mutual friend*, London 1912 (Nelson) [1865]: 28)
[Jespersen 1946: 148]

(21) a. We expected [**him** to give them the keys].
b. We consider [**him** innocent].
c. [For **him** not to give them the keys] would have been unexpected.

Poss-*ing* gerunds are characterised by the presence of a genitive subject (*my*) and the possible occurrence of a structural object (*you*) (cf. Abney 1987). In the structural linking approach outlined here, genitive case is found only on arguments of [+ N] predicates. This means that we will have to treat *telling* as a noun if we want to account for the genitive case on the subject. However, nouns can only ever license one structural argument in addition to their referential argument. Any other arguments must be realised as prepositional phrases (22).

(22) a. his destruction [**of** the documents]
b. * his destruction [the documents]

An analysis of Poss-*ing* gerunds as verbal predicates will correctly predict the possible appearance of structural objects in the objective case (23), but it cannot account for the genitive case of the subject.

(23) You must excuse [**my** telling **him**].

As discussed above, the highest structural argument of a verbal predicate must be linked with nominative case, and any lower arguments will link with objective case. This means that the subject of the gerund would be predicted to bear nominative rather than genitive case (24).

(24) I telling him

A similar mismatch between the predictions of structural linking and the actual case form of arguments occurs when a non-finite clause containing an overt subject appears as the argument of a higher predicate (25).[20]

(25) We expected [**him** to give them the keys].

The structural linking approach outlined above requires the highest structural argument of any predicate to be linked to nominative case unless it is θ-identified with an argument of a higher predicate.[21] This means that the highest argument of *give* will have to be analysed as θ-identified with an argument of *expect* in (25).[22] However, the semantic properties of *expect* make such an analysis highly implausible. As (26) illustrates, the verb *expect* only ever takes two arguments: the person expecting, and **either** the expected person (26a) **or** the expected event (26b).

(26) a. We expected him.
b. We expected [that he would give them the keys].
c. * We expected him [that he would give them the keys].

The interpretation of sentences where *expect* is followed by a non-finite clause (25) corresponds to the interpretation of sentences where *expect* is followed by a finite clause (26b). This suggests that *him* is not an argument of *expect* in the non-finite clause construction (25).

A θ-identification analysis is equally problematic for the subjects of non-finite clauses introduced by *for* (27).

(27) [For **him** not to give them the keys] would have been unexpected.

Nominative case linking to the highest argument of *give* in (27) can be prevented only by θ-identification of the subject with the lowest argument of *for*. Such an analysis seems plausible for sentences like (28), where there is a noticeable intonation break between *for him* and *not to give them the keys*, and *for* has a clearly prepositional interpretation.

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[20] The same problems arise with embedded non-verbal predicates that contain an overt subject (i)
(i) They considered [him innocent/a fool].

[21] The referential individual argument of a noun may also be θ-bound by a functional category.

[22] See Przpiórkowski (1998: 236-238) for an HPSG treatment of raising constructions along these lines.

(28) For him, [not to give them the keys] would have been unthinkable.

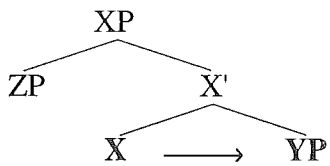
In (27), however, *for* does not seem to contribute any prepositional meaning to the sentence, and behaves like a functional head rather than a lexical predicate.

Case-marking in non-finite clauses and gerunds clearly poses a problem for a strictly argument structure-based approach to case assignment. This suggests that not all case-marking in Modern English can be accounted for by argument-structure linking. In Chapters 3 and 4, I will provide further evidence that casts doubt on the assumption that 'Case and agreement are entirely independent of word order' (Johnson & Lappin 1999: 83). As we will see, many of the pronoun case trends observed in Modern English point to an increasing influence of surface position on case marking.

2.2 Case and structural position

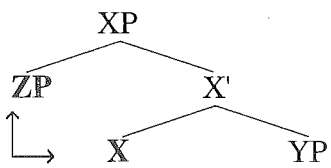
The syntactic configurations most often argued to be involved in case assignment are the head-complement relationship (29), which forms the basis of the most restrictive definition of government, and the specifier-head relationship (30), which forms the basis of spec-head agreement.

(29)



The head X governs its complement YP[23]

(30)



The head X can undergo spec-head agreement with its specifier ZP

[23] In most treatments of government, the head will also govern its specifier ZP.

Lexical case assignment is generally assumed to take place in conjunction with theta-marking (θ-marking) when a noun phrase enters the derivation (cf. Chomsky 1995: 386 n.55). Since lexical case assignment is tied to θ-marking, only lexical heads are able to assign lexical case.

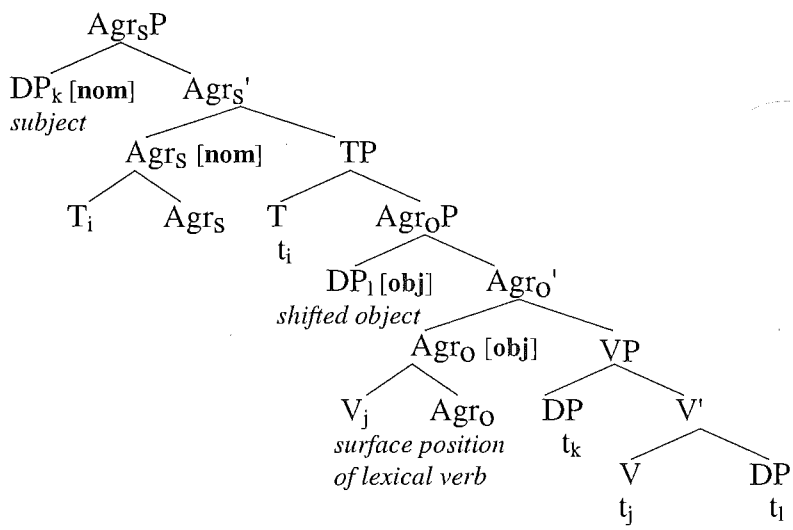
Whereas lexical case assignment tends not to be explicitly restricted to a particular structural configuration, many configurational approaches assume that structural case can only be checked in a spec-head configuration.

2.2.1 Case checking in Agr projections

In most current configurational approaches, a noun phrase has to move out of its base-position to check structural case via spec-head agreement with a functional head. Since structural case is often treated as the flip-side of ϕ-feature agreement,[24] the functional heads associated with structural case checking tend to be agreement-related (cf. Chomsky 1993, 1995, 2000; Schütze 1997).

Early treatments of case assignment via spec-head agreement assume that all structural case checking takes place in special agreement phrases (AgrPs). The nature of the case checked by a particular AgrP is determined by the properties of a lower head that raises to Agr (cf. Chomsky 1993: 7): An Agr containing T(ense) checks nominative case, an Agr containing the V head of a verb phrase checks objective case (31).

(31) Structural case checking via spec-head agreement with Agr heads containing T and V



[24] As mentioned in Chapter 1, the term 'ϕ-features' is used as shorthand for person, gender, and number features.

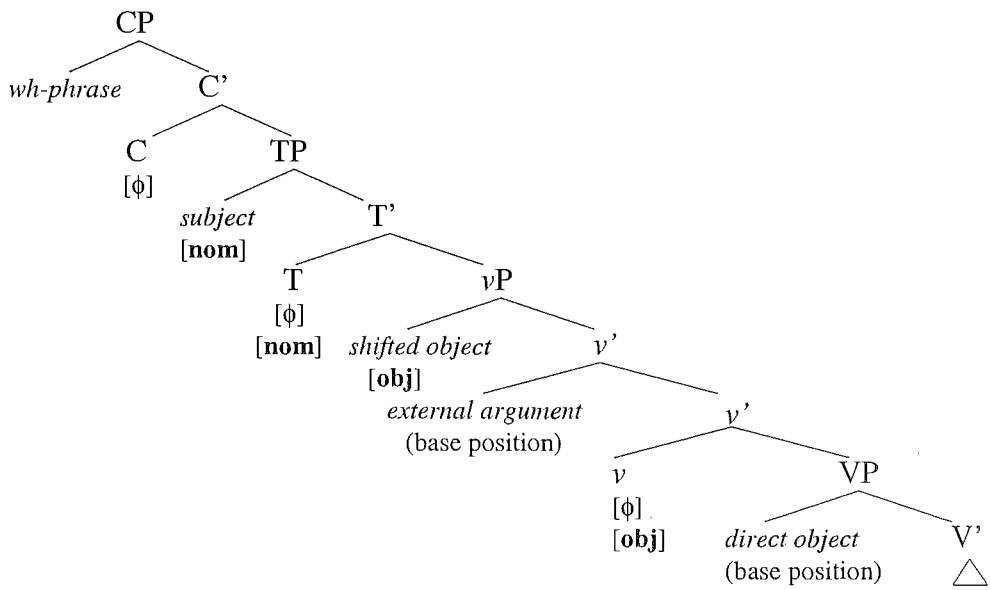
As can be seen from (31), the subject DP must move to [Spec, Agr_SP] to check nominative case, and the object DP must move to [Spec, Agr_OP] to check objective case. Since object noun phrases follow the lexical verb in English, the movement of the object DP to the [Spec, Agr_O] position is generally assumed to take place after Spell-Out.

In more recent discussions, case checking no longer involves separate Agr projections, but is associated with functional heads that are already required for other purposes (cf. Chomsky 1995: 349-355). Such a 'bare phrase structure' approach forms the basis of Positional Case (cf. Section 2.3.2), and will therefore be the focus of the next section.

2.2.2 Case checking without Agr projections

Chomsky (1995: 282; 2000) proposes that a finite transitive sentence has the basic structure given in (32).

(32) Basic structure of a finite transitive sentence according to Chomsky (1995 & 2000), where [ϕ] marks heads involved in agreement and case checking

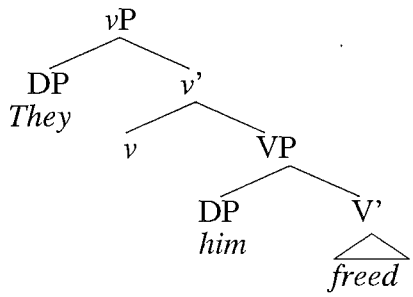


As can be seen from (32), the functional heads involved in (verb-related) case and agreement checking are C, T, and *v*. Finite T checks nominative case (in conjunction with C), and *v* checks objective case.

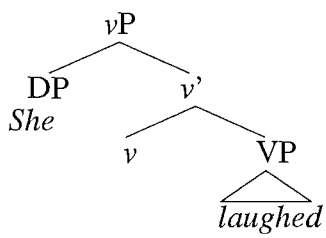
2.2.2.1 *v*P and case checking

The addition of the light verb *v* to the verb phrase was inspired by Larson's (1988) VP-shell analysis of double object constructions, and Hale & Keyser's work on argument structure (cf. Hale & Keyser 1993 & 1998). Following suggestions in Hale & Keyser (1993), Chomsky (1995: 315) argues that the *v*-VP configuration expresses 'the causative or agentive role' of the external argument.[25] Since arguments receive their θ-role when they enter the derivation, the external argument of any (agentive/causative) transitive verb (33) has to be base-generated in [Spec, *v*P].[26] The same goes for the sole (external) argument of unergative verbs (34).[27]

(33) Tree diagram illustrating the base positions of internal and external arguments in the (causative) transitive sentence *They freed him.*



(34) Tree diagram illustrating the base position of the (external) argument in the unergative sentence *She laughed.*



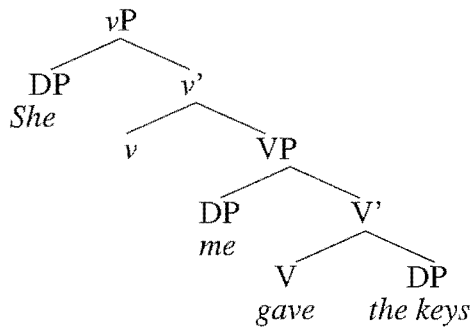
[25] Note that the external argument in [Spec, *v*P] receives its agent/cause θ-role from the *v*-VP complex rather than *v* alone. *v* is a functional rather than lexical head and is therefore unable to assign a θ-role and/or lexical case (Chomsky 2000: 102). The assumption that *v* is an (agreement-related) functional head is crucial to the proposal that *v* is able to check the structural case of an object that has raised to a higher [Spec, *v*P] position.

[26] In Chomsky (2001: 8) this base-generation of an argument in a θ-position is referred to as 'external Merge', in contrast to 'internal Merge' which involves movement to a derived position. According to Chomsky, '[a]rgument structure is associated with external Merge (base structure); everything else with internal Merge (derived structure)' (2001: 8).

[27] For a more detailed discussion of causative, unergative, and unaccusative verbs see Brousseau & Ritter (1991), Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995), and Hale & Keyser (1998).

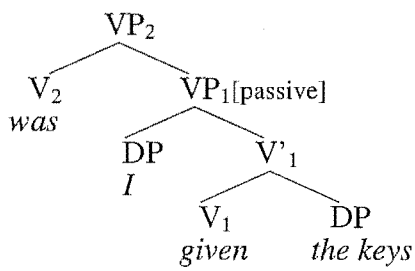
As can be seen from (33), the internal argument of a simple transitive verb is base-generated in [Spec, VP]. For ditransitive verbs such as double-object *give*, one of the internal arguments is base-generated in [Spec, VP], and the other is base-generated as the complement of V (35).

(35) Tree diagram illustrating the base positions of the internal and external arguments in the transitive sentence *She gave me the keys.*



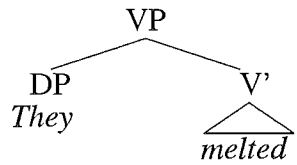
Passive verbs (36) and unaccusatives (37) do not license a structural agent or causer, which means that no *v*P-layer is present, and all argument DPs are base-generated within VP.[28]

(36) Tree diagram illustrating the base position of the (internal) arguments in the passive sentence *I was given the keys.*[29]



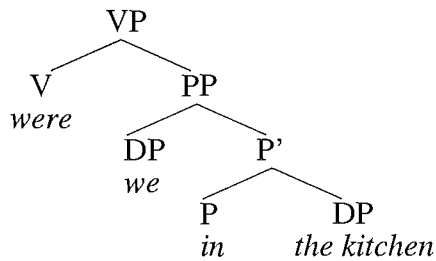
[28] See references cited in footnote 27 for more detail on the characteristics of unaccusative verbs.
[29] Note that neither the lower verb *give*, nor the passive auxiliary *be* project a *v*P-layer in (36).

(37) Tree diagram illustrating the base position of the (internal) argument in the unaccusative sentence *They melted.*

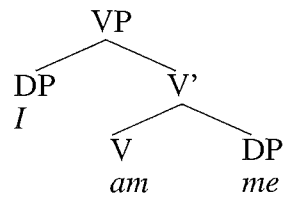


Similarly, no *v*P-layer is present in copular constructions (38) or in sentences involving identificational *be* (39).

(38) Tree diagram illustrating the base position of the (internal) arguments in the copular sentence *We were in the kitchen.*



(39) Tree diagram illustrating the base position of the (internal) arguments in the identificational sentence *I'm me.*[30]



Since *v* is assumed to be required for objective case checking in Chomsky's (1995) approach, the absence of a *v*P-layer in (39) means that objective case checking is impossible in constructions involving identificational *be*. As we will see in Chapter 4, this has important consequences for pronoun case in *it*-clefts and *it BE* sentences.

[30] Source of example sentence: advertisement for Cachet perfume [Wales 1996: 95].

Chomsky's (1995) proposal that *v* is not only involved in assigning the agent/cause θ-role to the external argument of a verb, but is also responsible for checking objective case, has its origins in Burzio's Generalization (40).

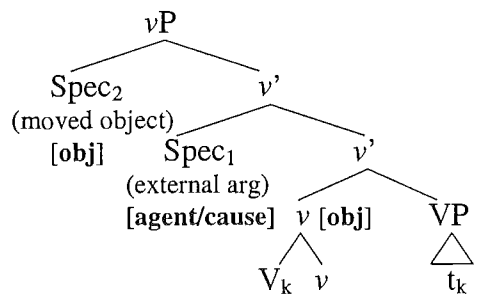
(40) **Burzio's Generalization** (adapted from Burzio 1986 & 2000)

If a verb does not assign an external θ-role, it will not assign structural objective case to its highest internal argument.

This generalization falls out naturally from the argument linking approach outlined in Section 2.1.1, where passivisation removes the highest argument of a verbal predicate from the argument hierarchy, and assigns the feature [- higher] to the argument next in line (5). The Specificity Principle (4) ensures that this argument will be linked to the nominative, which is also specified for the feature [- higher], rather than the objective, which is not specified for any particular features.

In configurational approaches, on the other hand, the link between argument structure and case assignment has generally had to be stipulated. In order to make an explicit structural connection between the assignment of an agent/cause role and the availability of structural objective case, Chomsky (1995: 355-360) posits that *v* may project more than one specifier (41).

(41)



The external argument is base-generated in the lower specifier position ($Spec_1$) where it receives the agent/cause role. Since structural case is only checked in derived positions,[31] the external argument has to move out of [$Spec_1$, *v*P] to check case. The object, which is base generated in [Spec, VP], moves to [$Spec_2$, *v*P] to check objective case. The lexical verb V always raises out of its base-position and adjoins to *v*.

[31] That is, a noun phrase cannot check structural case in the position where it receives its θ-role.

Since the object generally follows the verb in Modern English surface syntax, the raising of the object DP to [Spec, *v*P] and the checking of objective case in this position are usually treated as covert.[32] However, as I will try to demonstrate in the remainder of this thesis, there are good reasons to believe that some object DPs undergo overt movement to [Spec, *v*P], that the lexical verb always raises to the head of a functional projection dominating *v*P, and that all case checking takes place before Spell-Out. Support for such an analysis comes form the different behaviour of pronouns and full noun phrases in V-particle constructions:

As a comparison of (42) and (43) shows, full noun phrase objects are able to appear both after the particle (42a) and between the verb and the particle (42b) in V-particle constructions.[33] Unstressed unmodified lone pronouns, on the other hand, are only able to appear between the verb and the particle (43b).[34]

(42) a. Betsy threw out **her boyfriend**.
b. Betsy threw **her boyfriend** out.

(43) a. * Betsy threw out **him**.
b. Betsy threw **him** out.

---

[32] Strictly speaking, the covert movement is assumed to involve only the formal features of DP, which adjoin to the head *v* rather than *v'* (cf. Chomsky 1995: 360f, 370f). Since I am going to adopt a more surface-oriented approach, where all case checking must happen at Spell-Out, I will not discuss covert movement in any more detail in this thesis.

[33] The examples are adapted from Johnson (1991: 593f).

[34] V-particle constructions need to be distinguished from verb phrases containing directional PPs (cf. Radford 1988: 459f). Directional PPs differ from particles in that they may be modified by degree adverbs (i), and frequently contain noun phrase complements (ii). They also tend to permit a wider range of interpretations than are available for V-particle constructions.

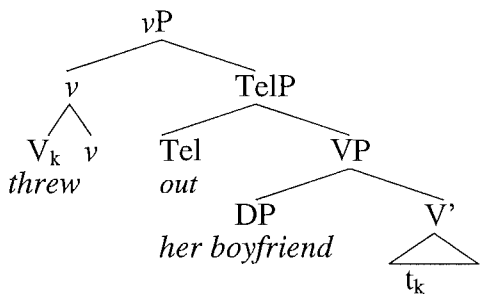
(i) a. She threw **her boyfriend/him** out of the window.
b. * She threw out of the window **her boyfriend/him**.
c. She threw **her boyfriend/him** out of her flat.
d. * She threw out of her flat **her boyfriend/him**.

(ii) a. She threw **her boyfriend/him** right out.
b. * She threw right out **her boyfriend/him**.

As can be seen from (i) and (ii), directional PPs are unable to intervene between the verb and its object, even when the object is a full noun phrase and the directional PP has roughly the same interpretation as the particle (ic-d).
The differences between (i)-(ii) and (42)-(43) suggest that the syntactic status of directional PPs differs from the syntactic status of particles in V-particle constructions. If we assume that objects are base-generated in [Spec, VP], then the easiest way to guarantee the word order in (ia), (ic), and (iia) is to assume that directional PPs are complements of V. Particles, on the other hand, are most plausibly analysed as occupying a position outside VP (cf. (44)).
I would like to thank Kate Kearns (p.c.) for drawing my attention to this issue.

In the approach adopted here, the object noun phrase is most plausibly analysed as occupying [Spec, VP] at Spell-Out in (42a), and [Spec, *v*P] in (42b). Following a suggestion by Kate Kearns (p.c.), I will assume that the telic particle *out* heads its own phrase (TelP), which immediately dominates VP.[35] When the object follows the particle as in (42a), the construction will thus have the structure given in (44).

(44) Proposed analysis of V-particle constructions with particle-object order



An analysis along the lines of (44) allows us to argue that the ungrammaticality of (43a) arises from the licensing requirements of weak pronouns in English (cf. Chapter 5). While full noun phrases may remain in their θ-position throughout the derivation, unstressed unmodified lone pronouns are weak and can only be licensed if they raise out of their θ-position into the specifier of a functional head associated with Positional Agreement in Present-Day English, that is, T (dominated by C), *v*, and D.[36]

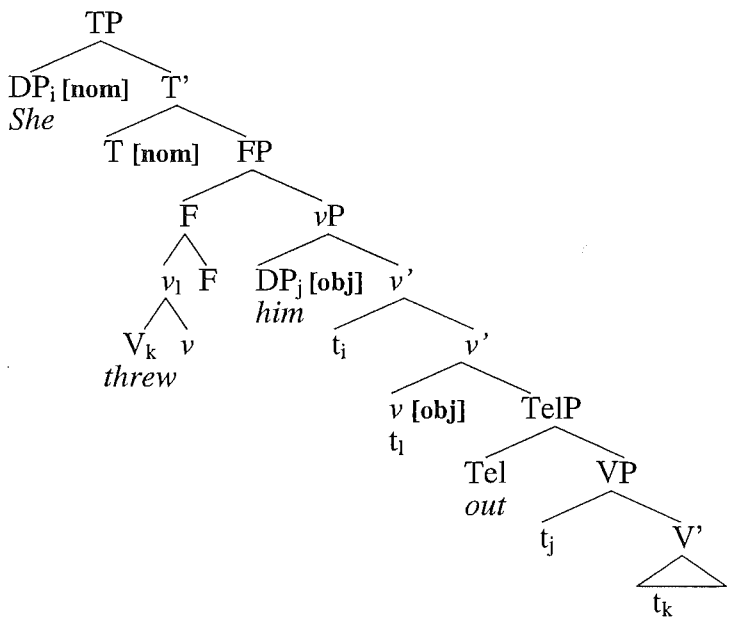
If weak pronouns must move out of their base position before Spell-Out, then the object-particle order in V-particle constructions will have to be analysed as involving movement of the object to the second [Spec, *v*P] position, and movement

[35] The analysis of the particle as the head of a phrase associated with telicity draws on proposals by Sawai (1997) and Ritter & Rosen (2000: 202ff), who argue that particles head a delimiting phrase (FP-delim), and also ties in with Bowers' (2002: 191ff) suggestion that telicity markers in Scottish Gaelic appear as the head of a predicate phrase (PrP). However, there are certain important differences between the analysis proposed here and these alternative proposals.
As Kate Kearns (p.c.) points out, 'telicity operates at the level of the inner event' and does not require the presence of an external argument. I therefore assume that TelP immediately dominates a VP that contains only internal arguments. FP-delim, on the other hand, is assumed to dominate the base positions of both internal and external arguments, while PrP may dominate either VP or a transitivity phrase (TrP). The properties of Tel also differ from the properties of the heads of FP-delim and PrP in that Tel is unable to project a specifier, and is also unavailable as a target for V-movement. TelP is thus neither involved in objective case checking, nor does it establish the predication relation between the subject and the predicate of a clause.

[36] For a more detailed discussion of Positional Agreement see Section 4.5.2.1.

of the V-*v* complex to a higher functional head (cf. Johnson 1991: 613 & 1996: 24, 38).[37]

(45) Proposed analysis of V-particle constructions with object-particle order[38]



In (45), both the subject pronoun *she* and the object pronoun *him* appear in a spec-head relationship with an agreement-related functional head. As a result, both are able to undergo case checking. The object pronoun *him* checks objective case with *v*, and the subject pronoun checks nominative case with T.

Further support for overt verb movement to a position higher than *v* comes from locative inversion (46) and deictic *there* constructions (47).[39] As illustrated in (46)-(47), full noun phrase subjects are able to occur after the verb in such constructions, but pronominal subjects are not.

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[37] Unlike Johnson (1991 & 1996), I am assuming that the functional head in question is lower than T, because the object pronoun also precedes the particle in sentences like (i), where T is clearly filled by the auxiliary *have* rather than the lexical verb *thrown*.

(i) She has thrown **him** out.

[38] F = functional head associated with the tense-aspect system. Since the exact identity of the functional head the verb moves to does not have any direct bearing on my analysis of case checking, I have decided to leave the category of this functional head unspecified.

[39] For an in-depth discussion of inversion constructions involving locative or directional PPs see Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995: 215-277), and Bresnan (1994). For more detail on deictic *there*-constructions see Lakoff (1987: 462-585).

(46) a. In came **Sue**.
b. * In came **she**.

(47) a. There goes **John**.
b. * There goes **he**.

If we assume that the verb has raised to a functional projection above *v* and below C in (46) and (47), then we can argue that (46b) and (47b) are ungrammatical because the weak pronoun has failed to raise out of its θ-position.[40] (46a) and (47a), on the other hand, will be fine, because full noun phrases do not need to raise to the specifier of an agreement-related functional head to be licensed.[41]

---

[40] This base position will either be [Spec, *v*P] or [Spec, VP], depending on our analysis of the argument structure of these verbs. Collins (1997: 27) assumes that locative inversion is only possible when the verb is treated as an unaccusative, and therefore analyses the postverbal noun phrase as occupying [Spec, VP]. However, if the lexical verb is able to move to a position beyond *v*P before Spell-Out (as I am arguing here), then the postverbal noun phrase could also be base-generated in [Spec, *v*P]. This would allow us to capture the fact that many of the verbs that occur in locative inversion constructions are basically unergative, even though the whole construction receives an unaccusative interpretation (cf. Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995: 215-277).

[41] Since only weak pronouns are subject to agreement-related licensing requirements (cf. Chapter 5), we might expect strong pronouns to have the same distribution as full noun phrases in V-particle constructions, locative inversion, and deictic *there* constructions. As we will see in the following chapters, modified and coordinated strong pronouns, are indeed able to occur in the same position as full noun phrases in these contexts. However, the occurrence of lone unmodified strong pronouns in post-particle position and in post-verbal subject position is extremely rare, and appears to be restricted to certain deictic uses, where the pronoun is strongly stressed, carries a noticeable pitch movement, and is accompanied by a pointing gesture (i)-(iii).

(i) In came ☞SHE. (the traitor!)

(ii) Betsy threw out ☞ME. (of all people - how could she have!)
(iii) Betsy threw out ☞HIM? (I can't believe it!)

A possible explanation for the general marginality of pronouns in post-verbal subject position and in post-particle position comes from research into the mapping between syntax and Information Structure. Vallduví & Vilkuna (1998), Ambar (1999), and Ouhalla (1999: 337f) discuss evidence from a variety of languages which suggests that when movement out of a θ-position is possible but not obligatory, a DP that remains in its base position tends to receive a rhematic (i.e. new information) interpretation at Information Structure. Since all pronouns are fundamentally topics (i.e. given information), and thus not very suited to serving as rhemes, we would expect even strong pronouns to exhibit a distinct preference for raising out of their base position, especially when they are uncoordinated and appear without any modifiers.

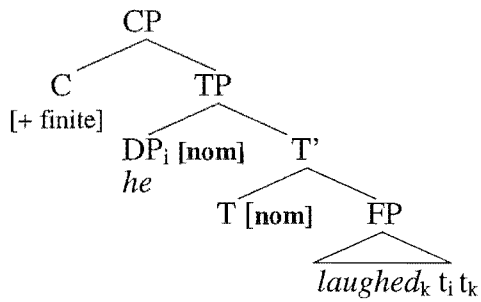
Since V-particle constructions, locative inversion, and deictic *there*-constructions suggest that lexical verbs must be able to move past *v*P before Spell-Out in Modern English, I will assume from now on, that the lexical verb always undergoes overt movement to a functional head beyond *v*P, and that all case checking happens at Spell-Out.[42] This means that pronouns will be able to undergo case checking only if they occupy the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out.

[42] For further evidence that lexical verbs undergo overt movement in Modern English, see Gelderen (1997: 132-145).

2.2.2.2 The roles of C and T in case checking

Chomsky (2001: 13) argues that T is not solely responsible for checking the case of a noun phrase in [Spec, TP], but always interacts with C (cf. Watanabe 1996: 12, 19; Chomsky 2001: 13).[43] In a finite clause, C endows T with the ability to check nominative case on the noun phrase (DP) in its specifier (48).

(48) Case checking involving C and T in finite clauses[44]



In a non-finite clause, T will only be able to check the case of an overt subject DP if C is filled with the complementizer *for* (49). Since a C containing *for* is [- finite], T checks objective rather than nominative case.[45]

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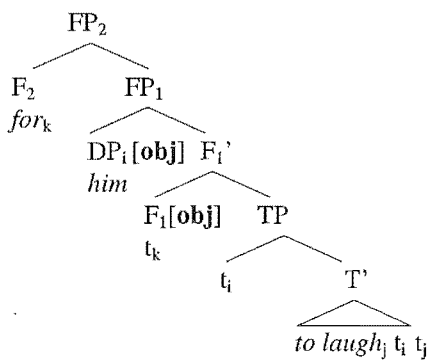
[43] For further arguments that C is crucially involved in case checking see Bittner & Hale (1996), Nash (1997:143), and Cormack (1999: 58).

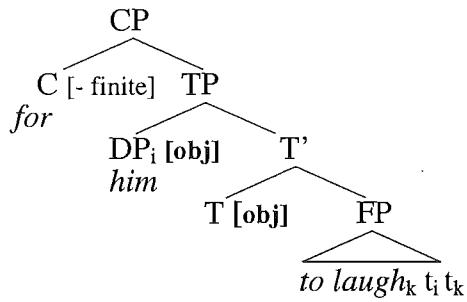
[44] As outlined above, I am assuming that the lexical verb moves to a functional head (F) beyond *v*P before Spell-Out. The lexical verb therefore precedes the trace of the subject DP in the tree diagrams.

[45] Alternatively, we could argue that the complementizer *for* has properties similar to T and *v* (cf. Kayne 2000: 314-326 and Kayne 2001), and is therefore able to attract the subject pronoun to its specifier to check objective case (i). An analysis along these lines would require us to posit that *for* moves to a higher functional head (F_2) before Spell-Out.

(i)



(49) Case checking involving C and T in non-finite clauses introduced by *for*[46]



When a *to*-infinitive with an overt subject DP is not introduced by *for*, the CP-layer is assumed to be absent, which means that T is unable to check case, and the subject DP has to raise to the specifier of the *v*P projected by the matrix verb to check objective case (50).

[46] As Law (2000: 172-177) and Wurmbrand (2001: 114) point out, evidence from negative sentences suggests that the inifinitive marker *to* occupies a position lower than T at Spell-Out. If *to* appeared in T at Spell-Out, we would expect it to precede *not* in neutral negative sentences, just like finite auxiliaries do (i).

(i) a. He **did/would** not laugh.
b. * He not did/would laugh.
c. He **has** not laughed.
d. * He not has laughed.
e. He **did/would/has** not. (VP-ellipsis)
f. * He not did/would/has.

However, infinitival *to* can only precede *not* in sentences involving constituent negation (ii). In order to be interpreted as negating the whole non-finite clause, *not* has to precede *to* (iii). This is particularly evident in VP-ellipsis constructions, which are compatible only with sentential negation (iv).

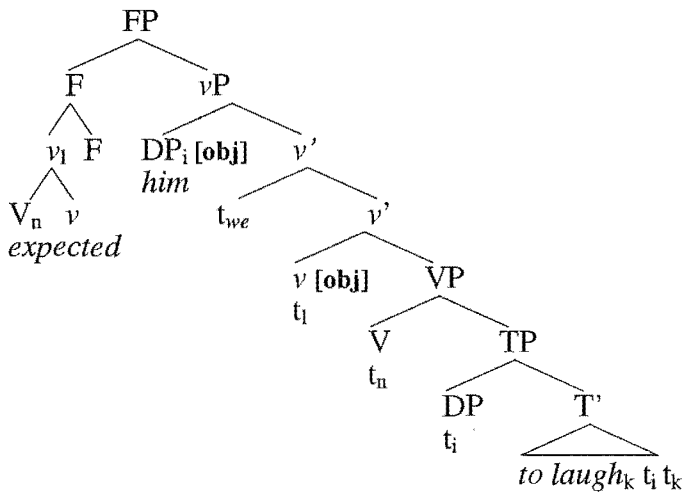
(ii) He tried [to not win]. (constituent negation)

(iii) a. [For him not **to** win] would be unexpected. (sentential negation)
b. We expected [him not **to** win]. (sentential negation)

(iv) a. We expected [him not **to**]. (VP-ellipsis)
b. * We expected [him to not].

For a more detailed discussion of the syntactic and semantic differences between sentential and constituent negation see Potsdam (1998: 142-147).

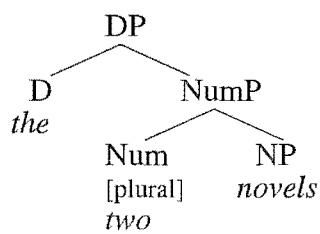
(50) Case checking on the subject of the embedded clause in the sentence *We expected him to laugh.*[47]



2.2.2.3 Case checking within DP

In many recent discussions of case checking within DP, D is assumed to interact with a lower functional head in checking genitive case on a DP in the specifier of the lower head (cf. Kayne 1994: 26, 85f; Siloni 1997: 41f; Alexiadou & Wilder 1998). For English, the most readily justifiable functional projection between DP and NP is NumP (cf. Lobeck 1995: 80-99).[48] NumP is headed by cardinal determiners such as *a/an, no, many*, and *two*,[49] and hosts the number features of a noun phase (cf. Lobeck 1995: 80, Ritter 1991: 50-58).

(51) Functional projections in the definite noun phrase *the two novels*[50]



[47] t_{we} = trace of the subject of the matrix clause

[48] The proposal that noun phrases contain an intermediate NumP-layer, goes back to Ritter's (1991) analysis of genitive constructions in Modern Hebrew.

[49] See Kearns (2000: 73-76) for a discussion of the differences between proportional and cardinal determiners.

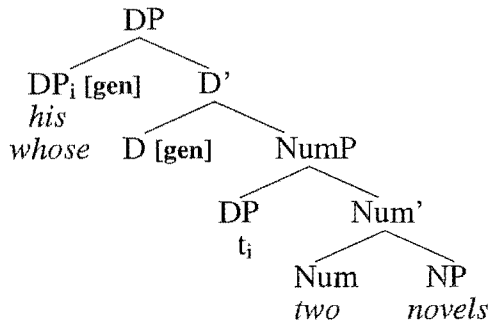
[50] Like Lobeck (1995: 84), I assume that only definite noun phrases project a DP-layer. In an indefinite noun phrase such as *two novels*, the highest functional projection would be NumP.

Since both D and Num are agreement-related functional heads whose presence in the phrase structure is already required for non-case purposes,[51] both D and Num qualify as potential case checkers in a bare phrase structure approach. I will nevertheless follow Abney's (1987: 83f, 271) suggestion that D alone is responsible for genitive case checking within DP, and that the genitive noun phrase occupies [Spec, DP] at Spell-Out. As discussed earlier, structural case must be checked in a derived position, i.e. in a position distinct from that associated with θ-role assignment. In English, DPs with genitive case marking always precede the adjectives and cardinal determiners within a noun phrase (52). This suggests that the lowest possible base position for genitive DPs in an English noun phrase is [Spec, NumP] (cf. Ritter 1991: 47).

(52) a. **his/whose/Kim's** two new novels
b. * two **his/whose/Kim's** new novels
c. * two new **his/whose/Kim's** novels

If we assume that genitive noun phrases are base-generated in [Spec, NumP] and receive their θ-role there,[52] then the only derived position available for genitive case checking is [Spec, DP]:

(53) Case checking by D in the noun phrase *his/whose two novels*



[51] Num specifies the number features of a noun phrase, and D is required for the θ-binding of the referential argument of the noun (cf. Higginbotham 1985: 560; Wunderlich 1997: 34).
[52] While genitive DPs may have either an AGENTIVE or a TELIC interpretation (cf. Section 2.1.1), structural AGENTIVE and TELIC arguments never cooccur in an English noun phrase. I will therefore assume that there is only one θ-position for structural arguments in a noun phrase. As mentioned in Section 2.1.1 (footnotes 5 & 18), only arguments realised as noun phrases count as structural arguments in the approach adopted here (cf. Wunderlich 1997: 38-42, 46f). Arguments of a predicate that are realised as PPs are not considered to be structural. For example, *his* is a structural argument of the noun *destruction* in the DP *his destruction of the documents*, but *the documents* is not, because it is contained in a PP headed by *of*.

Unlike structural linking (cf. Section 2.1.2), case checking by D can account for the occurrence of genitives in Poss-*ing* gerunds as well as noun phrases, provided we adopt an analysis of Poss-*ing* gerunds along the lines proposed in Abney (1987). Abney (1987: 223f) assumes that gerunds contain an abstract morpheme *-ING*, which adds the categorical feature [+ N] to the projection it attaches to. For Poss-*ing* gerunds, *-ING* attaches to VP and turns it into an NP dominated by a complete DP-layer. The subject of a Poss-*ing* gerund raises to [Spec, DP] and checks genitive case with D. For Acc-*ing* gerunds, *-ING* attaches to TP and turns it into a DP. The subject surfaces in [Spec, TP] and is unable to check structural case.

While Abney's (1987) proposal successfully accounts for the genitive case found on the subjects of Poss-*ing* gerunds, some aspects of his analysis will have to be modified if it is to fit in with current assumptions about phrase structure. As Kate Kearns (p.c.) points out *-ING* behaves like a functional head, and should therefore be assigned a consistent category and complementation. Since both Poss-*ing* and Acc-*ing* gerunds appear to be temporally independent, *-ING* is best analysed as taking a TP as its complement.[53] If we assume that *-ING* belongs to the category Num and optionally projects a DP-layer, then Poss-*ing* gerunds could be argued to arise from the projection of this optional DP-layer above NumP, while Acc-*ing* gerunds result when the DP-layer fails to be projected.[54] The presence of the DP-layer in Poss-*ing* gerunds allows the subject of the gerund to check genitive case in [Spec, DP] (54).

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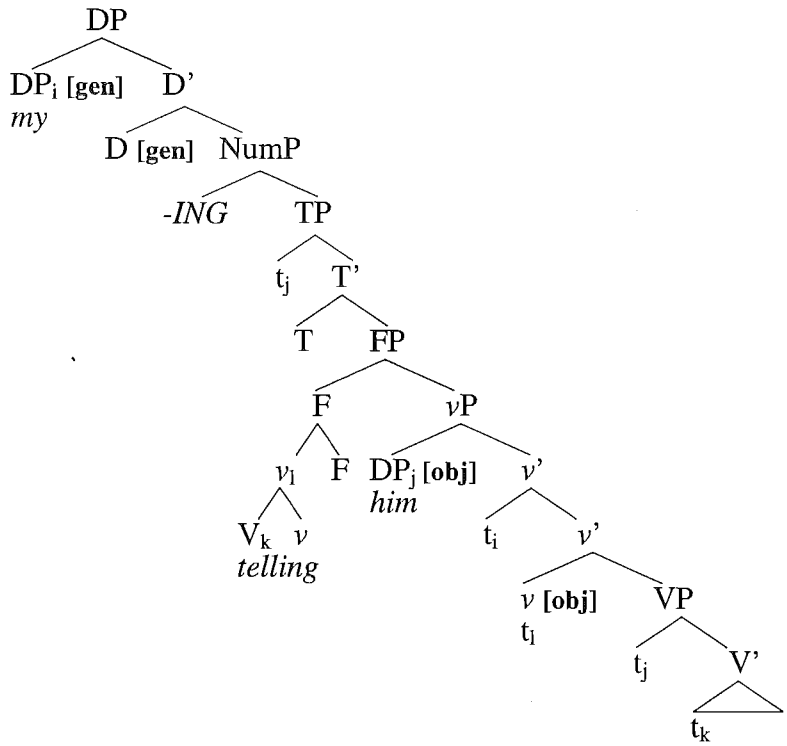
[53] Wurmbrand (2001: 100f) suggests that infinitives project a TP-layer if they permit independent temporal reference in the form of a temporal adverbial or the prefective auxiliary *have*. As the grammaticality of (i) and (ii) demonstrates, perfective *have* appears readily in both Poss-*ing* and Acc-*ing* gerunds, which suggests that both contain a TP-layer.

(i) There is no record of [his ever <u>having</u> lost his temper]
(ii) There is no record of [him ever <u>having</u> lost his temper]

The example in (i) is taken from Stacey Aumonier's *Olga Bardel* (London 1916: 74) [cited in Jespersen 1946: 111].

[54] As Kate Kearns (p.c.) notes, Poss-*ing* gerunds bear a structural resemblance to definite noun phrases in this analysis, and Acc-*ing* resemble indefinites.

(54) Case checking in Poss-*ing* gerunds



As can be seen from the analysis of Poss-*ing* gerunds (54) and non-finite clauses (49)-(50), a configurational treatment predicts the pronoun case forms found in these constructions more accurately than the structural linking approach outlined in Section 2.1. Since case checking captures the distribution of pronoun case forms in finite clauses and noun phrases just as well as case linking, it might seem tempting to completely abandon the structural linking approach in favour of a purely configurational approach to case marking in Modern English.

However, there is one instance of case marking that is straightforwardly predicted in a structural linking approach to case, but has proved notoriously difficult for case checking analyses: the case of prepositional objects.

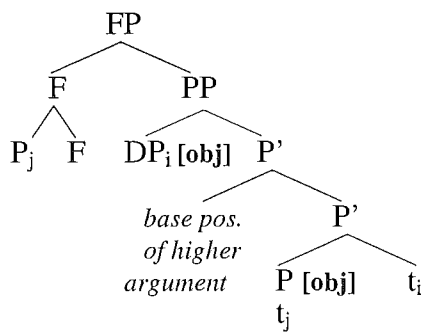
2.2.3 The case properties of prepositions

In the structural linking approach outlined in section 2.1.1, the case marking of a prepositional object is determined in the same way as the case marking of a verbal object. The case of the argument of any predicate is affected by the nature of the predicate and the position of the argument on the argument hierarchy. Both verbs and prepositions have the category feature [- N], which means that their arguments may be linked either with nominative case or with objective case. The linking of arguments with cases is feature-driven. Any argument available for

structural linking must be associated with the case whose structural feature specification is most closely compatible with the structural features of the argument itself. The structural features of the different cases are determined by parameter setting. In Modern English, nominative case is specified as [- higher], whereas objective case is unspecified for structural features.[55] The structural features of an argument are determined by its position on the argument hierarchy of a predicate. Since any object of a verb or preposition is preceded by the external argument of the verb/preposition on the argument hierarchy, it will bear the structural feature [+ higher]. This feature specification is incompatible with the [- higher] feature of the nominative, which means that any verbal or prepositional object will surface with objective case (cf. Section 2.1.1, examples (3) and (7)).

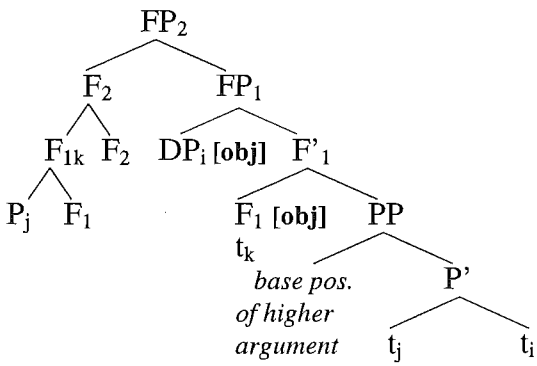
In the case checking approach outlined in Section 2.2.2, on the other hand, a noun phrase is only able to check structural case if it appears as the specifier of an independently motivated agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out. This means that we will have to assume either that argument-taking prepositions are agreement-related functional heads that are able to participate in case checking (55),[56] or that a separate agreement-related functional head is present within the prepositional phrase (56). Since the preposition precedes its object in surface syntax, we will also have to posit a further functional head that the preposition must raise to before Spell-Out.

(55) Preposition-related projections required for structural case checking if P is treated as an agreement-related functional head



[55] That is, objective case is the elsewhere case, which will be linked to any structural argument that does not meet the feature specification for the nominative (cf. Section 2.1.1 for further discussion).
[56] See Zubizarreta (1998: 25-27) for a proposal that P is involved in the (covert) checking of the formal features of the object DP.

(56) Preposition-related projections required for structural case checking if P is assumed not to be able to check structural case



Neither (55) nor (56) is easy to justify.

As mentioned in footnote 45, the complementizer *for* could be argued to be an agreement-related functional head that is able to participate in objective case checking in the manner outlined in (55). An analysis of argument-taking prepositions as agreement-related functional heads is much less plausible, though. The functional heads *v*, T, C, and D do not take DP arguments and are unable to assign θ-roles (cf. Chomsky 2000: 102).[57] Prepositions such as *to, with, about, between*, on the other hand, clearly are able to take DP arguments and θ-mark them.

If the preposition itself is not able to participate in structural case checking, we will have to assume that the prepositional phrase contains an additional agreement-related functional head (56).[58] However, while functional heads suitable for case checking are readily available in clauses and noun phrases, it is difficult to find an independent motivation for the presence of such a head in a prepositional phrase.

If we want to maintain a purely configurational approach to case marking, a last remaining solution would be to treat the case assigned by prepositions in Modern English as lexical rather than structural case. As mentioned at the start of Section 2.2, configurational approaches to lexical case assignment generally assume that lexical case is associated with θ-marking rather than spec-head agreement, and only involves lexical heads. Since argument-taking prepositions assign θ-roles to their objects and are clearly lexical rather than functional heads,

[57] As mentioned in footnote 25, the agent/cause role is assigned by the *v*-VP complex rather than *v*.
[58] See Runner (1998: 32) for an analysis along these lines, where the case of the prepositional object is checked in a preposition-related Agr projection.

lexical case assignment would seem a fairly plausible option. However, there are certain factors that speak against an analysis of prepositions as lexical case assigners in Modern English:

As noted in Section 1.3, lexical case assignment is generally associated with particular thematic relations, and would be expected to vary with the preposition and/or its interpretation. While different prepositions appear to have assigned different cases in Old English (cf. Gelderen 2000: 62; Mitchell 1985: 496-499), there is no evidence for θ-related differences in case assignment between prepositions in Modern English (cf. Runner 1998: 31f).[59]

Further evidence for the structural nature of the case assigned by prepositions comes from preposition stranding (P-stranding) in *wh*-questions (57) and pseudo-passives (58).[60]

(57) Who did you vote <u>for</u>?
(58) I've been shouted <u>at</u> already.

Kayne (1984: 115) and Arnold (1996: 4f) suggest that the stranding of the preposition in sentences like (57) and (58) is possible in Modern English, because the V-P sequence can undergo some kind of reanalysis. According to Kayne (1984: 115), the possibility of P-stranding in Modern English suggests that prepositions assign structural case, because 'reanalysis between two lexical categories is possible only if they assign Case in the same way'. Since verbal case is clearly structural in Modern English, the case assigned by prepositions will have to be structural as well. In languages where V is involved in structural case assignment, but P assigns case inherently, P-stranding of the kind found in (57) and (58) is predicted to be impossible.

Interestingly, the history of English provides supporting evidence for Kayne's reanalysis principle. As discussed in Section 1.3, prepositions appear to have assigned inherent case to their objects in Old English, but many verbal objects already appeared with structural case. Kayne's reanalysis principle would lead us to expect that P-stranding in *wh*-questions and pseudo-passives was impossible in Old English, and this is indeed the case. P-stranding in pseudo-passives and *wh*-questions is first attested in Middle English (cf. Allen 1980: 224-230; Arnold

[59] As I will demonstrate in Chapters 4 and 5, we do find differences in case marking between argument-taking prepositions, complementizers, and focus prepositions, but these differences are due to the presence versus absence of a thematic relationship with the following noun phrase rather than differences in the nature of the thematic relation.
[60] (57) is based on an example given by Kayne (1984: 103).

1996), when there was no longer any morphological evidence of lexical case marking by prepositions (cf. Section 1.3).[61]

The evidence discussed in this section suggests that objects of prepositions receive structural case, but not in quite the same way as verbal arguments in canonical subject and object position. In Section 2.3, I will propose that the structural case requirements for prepositional objects are determined solely by structural linking, whereas the structural case requirements for verbal arguments in canonical subject and object position are determined by case checking as well as structural linking.

2.3 Positional Case, Argument Case, and Default Case

As demonstrated in the preceding sections, configurational approaches to structural case account rather well for case checking within clauses and noun phrases, but run into problems when applied to prepositions and their objects. Structural linking on the other hand, is able to account for the case marking on prepositional objects, but cannot predict the case properties of Poss-*ing* gerunds and non-finite clauses.

Given that neither case checking nor case linking alone is able to provide a complete account of pronoun case in Modern English, I would like to argue that the distribution of pronoun forms is constrained by both types of structural case, as

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[61] Since a detailed investigation of prepositions and case would have been beyond the scope of this thesis, I am assuming that the observations made here hold for all argument-taking prepositions in Present-Day English. It is however possible that prepositional predicates functioning as the argument of a verb have different case properties from adverbial prepositional predicates such as *before, after, outside* 'which convey circumstatial information about an action, object or process' (Jolly 1993: 275; cf. also Kayne 2001). As (57), (58) and (i) illustrate, preposition stranding is fine when the PP is selected by the verb and has an argumental rather than adverbial function. When the PP is clearly adverbial however, stranding appears much more marginal (ii)-(iii).

(i) Which officer did you give your keys to?

(ii) *? Which meal did he smoke the cigars after?
(cf. After which meal did he smoke the cigars?)

(iii) *? Which building did they stage their protest outside?
(cf. Outside which building did they stage their protest?)

It is likely that the prepositions in (ii)-(iii) are unable to undergo the reanalysis required for preposition stranding because they do not have the close semantic and syntactic relationship with the verb that is exhibited by argument PPs (cf. Arnold 1996: 4f). The absence of preposition stranding in itself is thus not necessarily proof that adverbial prepositions assign lexical case to their objects. However, it does mean that we have considerably less evidence for structural case assignment by adverbial prepositions than for structural case assignment by argument prepositions. I would like to thank Liz Pearce and Diane Massam for drawing my attention to this issue.

well as a default case requirement. As I will demonstrate in the following chapters, the case form of a pronoun is determined by the interaction of case checking, case linking, and default case, as well as some factors other than case. The competition between these different influences is the source of pronoun case variation in Modern English. Since violations of structural case requirements do not lead to ungrammaticality, the influence of case checking, case linking and default case is best captured in three violable case constraints: Argument Case, which is based on structural linking; Positional Case, which is based on spec-head agreement at Spell-Out; and Default Case, which requires all pronouns in positions not covered by Positional Case to surface in the objective default case. The case predictions of these constraints are summarised in Sections 2.3.1-2.3.3. As we will see in Section 2.3.4, Positional Case and Default Case are in complementary distribution, but both constraints may compete with Argument Case, because arguments of a predicate can appear either in Positional Case or in Default Case positions.

2.3.1 Argument Case

The Argument Case constraint (59) is based on the structural linking approach outlined in Section 2.1.1.

(59) **Argument Case**
The overt case form of any structural argument of a predicate must comply with the structural linking between cases and arguments in the θ-structure.

As discussed in Section 2.1.1, structural linking makes the following predictions for case marking in Modern English:

(a) The **highest structural argument** of a predicate must bear **nominative case**, because nominative case has the structural feature [- higher].[62]

(b) **All other structural arguments of a verb or preposition** must surface in their **objective case** form, because objective case is unspecified for structural features and associated with predicates that have the category feature [- N].

(c) **The remaining structural argument of a noun** must bear **genitive case**, because genitive case is unspecified for structural features and associated with [+ N] predicates.

[62] As discussed in Section 2.1.1, the highest structural argument of a noun is referential and structurally realised only in small clauses such as *She a beauty!*. In non-predicative noun phrases, the highest structural argument is usually θ-bound, and therefore not present in the syntax.

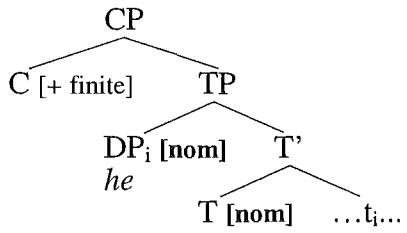
2.3.2 Positional Case

The Positional Case constraint (60) is based on the spec-head agreement approach to case checking outlined in Section 2.2.2.[63]

(60) **Positional Case**
The overt case form of an argument noun phrase appearing as the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out must match the case/agreement features of this functional head,
iff the position of the noun phrase at Spell-Out differs from its θ-position.[64]

The tree diagrams in (61)-(64) illustrate how case checking applies to (argument) DPs in the specifier of the various agreement-related functional heads associated with case checking in Modern English.

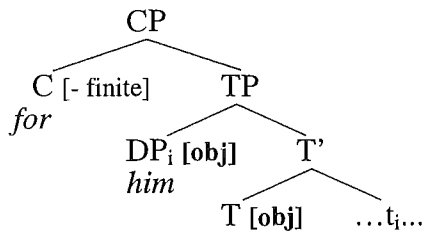
(61) Case checking on (argument) DPs that occupy [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out in finite clauses



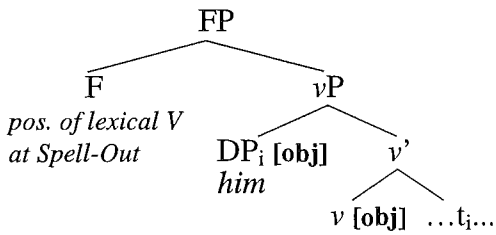
[63] Note however that there is an important difference between minimalist case checking and the Positional Case constraint.
In a minimalist approach, structural case features on nouns and agreement features on verbs are uninterpretable and will crash the derivation if they remain unchecked. This means that in any convergent derivation, all argument noun phrases are assumed to have undergone case checking , either overtly or after Spell-Out.
In the constraint-based approach adopted here, Positional Case is only checked if an argument noun phrase has raised out of its θ-position and occupies the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out. If the noun phrase remains in its θ-position at Spell-Out, the Positional Case constraint is inapplicable and has no bearing on the convergence of the derivation.

[64] Although I am assuming that Positional Case only affects argument noun phrases, it is difficult to determine whether non-argument DPs could ever check Positional Case. In English at least, pronouns with alternating case forms are always arguments when they appear in positions covered by Positional Case. As we will see in Chapter 10, Positional Case is likely to have started out as a constraint on argument noun phrases, but it seems conceivable that the argument status of a DP would eventually become irrelevant for Positional Case marking.

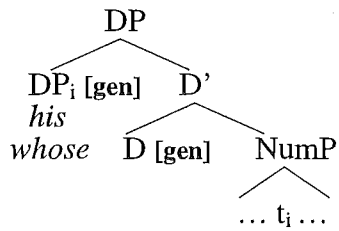
(62) Case checking on (argument) DPs that occupy [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out in non-finite clauses introduced by *for*



(63) Case checking on (argument) DPs that occupy [Spec, *v*P] at Spell-Out



(64) Case checking on (argument) DPs that occupy [Spec, DP] at Spell-Out



2.3.3 Default Case

The Default Case constraint (65) affects all noun phrases not covered by the Positional Case constraint: It constrains the case form of any structural argument that does not appear in the specifier of one of the agreement-related functional heads associated with case checking in Modern English; and it also constrains the case form of any pronoun that is not a structural argument of a predicate.

(65) **Default Case**

The overt case form of **any noun phrase not covered by the Positional Case constraint** must match the default case of a language.

In Modern English, the default case is the **objective**.

Since the Default Case constraint primarily affects DPs that are topicalised, dislocated, or otherwise separated from the functional heads involved in case checking, its influence on pronoun case in Modern English will become more apparent in Chapters 3 and 4, which look at pronoun case variation in precisely these environments.

2.3.4 The interaction of the three case constraints

As Positional Case and Default Case apply in mutually exclusive contexts, a DP can only ever be subject to either Positional Case or Default Case. The case form of a DP may however be simultaneously constrained by Argument Case and Positional Case, or by Argument Case and Default Case. The table in (66) provides a brief summary of the constraint combinations applicable in different contexts.

(66) Table summarising which case constraints apply to argument and non-argument DPs in different syntactic positions

status of the DP	**applicable case constraints**
argument which has raised out of its θ-position **and** appears in the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out	Argument Case Positional Case
argument that has remained in its θ-position **and/or** does not occupy the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out	Argument Case Default Case
non-argument (in all syntactic positions)	Default Case

In most instances of pronoun case marking discussed so far, the applicable case constraints make the same predictions. Thus, both Argument Case and Positional Case require pronominal subjects of finite clauses to be nominative, and predict that pronominal objects of verbs should be objective (67).

(67) **She** gave **me** the keys. (pronoun case forms predicted by both Argument Case and Positional Case)

Similarly, both Argument Case and Default Case predict that objects of prepositions should be objective (68).

(68) between **us** (pronoun case form predicted by both Argument Case and Default Case)

For pronouns in the specifier of a noun phrase, both Argument Case and Positional Case stipulate genitive case (69).

(69) **his/whose** novel (pronoun case form predicted by both Argument Case and Positional Case)

However, in Poss-*ing* gerunds, Argument Case would predict nominative subjects, whereas Positional Case correctly captures that the subject should take the genitive case form (70).

(70) a. You must excuse [**my** telling **him**]. (pronoun case forms predicted by Positional Case)

b. * You must excuse [**I** telling **him**]. (pronoun case forms predicted by Argument Case)

The predictions of Positional Case are also more accurate than the predictions of Argument Case when it comes to the case of subjects in embedded non-finite clauses (71).

(71) a. We expected [**him** to give **them** the keys]. (pronoun case forms predicted by Positional Case)

b. * We expected [**he** to give **them** the keys]. (pronoun case forms predicted by Argument Case)

The pronoun case evidence from Poss-*ing* gerunds (70) and non-finite clauses (71) suggests that any case clash between Argument Case and Positional Case is resolved in favour of the pronoun form required by Positional Case. This indicates that Positional Case is more influential than Argument Case in Modern English.

The following chapters discuss case variation patterns which suggest that Positional Case is also more influential than the Default Case constraint in Modern English. As we will see in Chapters 3 and 4, pronoun case variation tends to arise when the demands of Argument Case clash with Default Case requirements, or when Default Case is the only case constraint affecting the pronoun. Both of these

trends indicate that Default Case is more easily overridden by competing case and non-case constraints than Positional Case.

Further evidence for the relative weighting of Positional Case and Default Case in Modern English comes from case differences between objects of verbs and objects of prepositions in the empirical data presented in Chapter 7. As mentioned above, the form of prepositional objects is constrained by Argument Case and Default Case, whereas the form of verbal objects is constrained by Argument Case and Positional Case. The results of the empirical survey suggest that pronoun case variation is more likely to occur with objects of prepositions than with objects of verbs. Such a difference between prepositional and verbal objects is expected if the influence of Default Case is weaker than the influence of Positional Case.

As I will demonstrate in Chapter 10, the relative importance of Positional Case (and thus configurational case checking) in Modern English can be seen as a consequence of the shift from morphological to positional licensing at the end of the Middle English period.

3 Pronoun case variation in Modern English, Part 1: *wh*-pronouns

Table of chapter contents

3.0 Introduction

Chapters 3 and 4 look at syntactic constructions that have been associated with pronoun case variation in existing studies of Modern English. As mentioned at the start of Chapter 2, formal approaches to case tend to treat pronoun case forms as overt manifestations of an underlying case system. Such a view of pronoun case would lead us to predict that pronoun case variation will arise only from the interaction of different types of case assignment and/or from parametric differences in the syntactic properties of the construction concerned. The aim of Chapters 3 and 4 is to examine some of the existing evidence for pronoun case variation in more detail, and to establish whether the attested variation can be accounted for purely in terms of the three case constraints that were identified as relevant to Modern English in Chapter 2:

(1) **Argument Case** (abbreviated as **Arg-Case**)
The overt case form of any structural argument of a predicate must comply with the structural linking between cases and arguments in the θ-structure.

In Modern English, **nominative case** has the structural feature [- higher], which means that it must be linked to the **highest structural argument** of a predicate.
Both **objective** and **genitive case** are unspecified for structural features, but objective case is restricted to arguments of [- N] predicates, while genitive case is limited to arguments of [+ N] predicates. This means that **objective case** must be linked to **all remaining structural arguments** of a **verb or preposition**, while **genitive case** must be linked to the **remaining structural argument** of a **noun**.

(2) **Positional Case** (abbreviated as **Pos-Case**)
The overt case form of an argument noun phrase appearing as the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out must match the case/agreement features of this functional head,
iff the position of the noun phrase at Spell-Out differs from its θ-position.

In Modern English the following functional heads are involved in the checking of Positional Case:

(a) **finite C** combines with **T** to check **nominative case** on a noun phrase in [Spec, TP]

(b) **non-finite C** filled by the complementizer ***for*** combines with **T** to check **objective case** on a noun phrase in [Spec, TP]

(c) *v* checks **objective case** on its specifier

(d) **D** checks **genitive case** on its specifier

(3) **Default Case** (abbreviated as **Def-Case**)
The overt case form of **any noun phrase not covered by the Positional Case constraint** must match the default case of a language.
In Modern English, the default case is the **objective**.

Denison (1993: 22) suggests that the main change in the English case system during the Modern English period

> has been a continued shift towards objective as unmarked form, most noticeable in such patterns as *It's me* and *taller than me* [...], where subjective *I* would have been normal at earlier times.

This view appears to be shared by many, and similar statements can be found in Harris (1981), Emonds (1985: 237f & 1986: 93-96, 121), Kjellmer (1986), and Wales (1996: 88f, 93, 107).

If these observations are correct, we would expect the Default Case constraint to be very strong in Present-Day English. However, a closer look at the available evidence suggests that the distribution of pronoun case forms in Present-Day English is characterised by more than just a uniform trend towards objective case. Although we do find objective case forms in positions previously reserved for nominatives, we also find nominative pronoun forms (especially *who* and *I*) in

environments traditionally considered to require objective case (cf. Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 274).

As we will see in the remainder of this chapter and in Chapter 4, the case form of both *wh-* and personal pronouns tends to correlate with the structural position of the pronoun at Spell-Out, its status in the argument hierarchy of a predicate, and the presence versus absence of agreement. Case variation typically occurs when a pronoun is in some way separated from an appropriate case-agreement head, and/or where the position of the pronoun is structurally ambiguous.

Competition between the three case constraints, and the availability of alternative structural analyses can account for some of the case variation reported in existing studies. However, many of the trends discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 are difficult to account for in a purely case-based approach. Interestingly, all instances of pronoun case variation that resist a purely case-based analysis occur in strong pronoun contexts (cf. Chapter 5). The case patterns observed in strong pronoun contexts indicate that strong pronoun forms not only identify the structural case of a pronoun, but also code its position within a syntactic construction, and identify its morphosyntactic status as a strong pronoun. Thus, pronouns tend towards invariant *who, me, him, her, us, them* in all strong pronoun contexts, and strong pronouns in asymmetrically c-commanding positions tend to surface in the forms *who, me, he, she, we, they*, while strong pronouns in asymmetrically c-commanded positions tend to surface in the forms *whom, I, him, her, us, them. They* is more likely to surface in asymmetrically c-commanded positions than *who, me, he, she,* and *we.* In Chapter 8, these tendencies are captured in a set of Invariant Strong Form constraints (4), and in two Relative Positional Case constraints, which relate pronoun form to syntactic position (5)-(6).

(4) **Invariant Strong Form**

The morphological form of **strong pronoun forms** must be **invariant** in all contexts. There is a separate Invariant constraint for each pronoun.

The invariant personal pronoun forms are: *me, him, her, us, them*
The invariant *wh*-forms are: *who, whoever*

(5) **Relative Positional Coding 1**

If a constituent A asymmetrically c-commands a constituent B in a given syntactic construction,
then A must be **gracile**, and B must be **robust**.

The set of gracile pronoun forms comprises: *me, he, she, we, they, who*
The set of robust pronoun forms comprises: *I, him, her, us, them, whom*

(6) **Relative Positional Coding 2**

If a constituent A asymmetrically c-commands a constituent B in a given syntactic construction,
then B must be **more robust** than A.

In the set of gracile pronoun forms, *they* is more robust than *me, he, she, we.*

Although the main aim of Chapters 3 and 4 is to establish which contexts promote pronoun case variation in English, the data discussed in these chapters also serve to illustrate the shortcomings of any study based solely on literary corpora and anecdotal evidence. The lack of exhaustive pronoun case data from individual authors means that it is often difficult to determine whether observed differences in pronoun case represent different diachronic stages, synchronic variation between speakers, or case variability within the speech of individuals.[1] As we will see in Chapters 9 and 10, the exact nature of the variation has important implications for any theoretical analysis of pronoun case in English. While diachronic change and synchronic variation between speakers can be accounted for in terms of different parameter settings, variability within the speech of individuals is more easily captured in a probabilistic approach.

[1] I would like to thank Diane Massam (p.c.) for alerting me to the importance of this issue.

3.1 Pronoun case in questions and relative clauses

Probably the most advanced development in the pronoun case system of Modern English is the spread of the nominative *wh*-form *who* to contexts that used to require the objective form *whom* (cf. Sigley 1997: 67f; Lasnik & Sobin 2000).

According to Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 241ff), the use of *who* as the object of a verb or stranded preposition is extremely common from the (late) Middle English period onwards. However, the extension of *who* did not immediately apply to all objective *wh*-contexts. As Traugott (1972: 125ff) points out, questions like (7a) and (7b) are attested as early as 1500 (cf. also Mustanoja 1960: 181), but the use of *who* instead of *whom* in relatives such as (8a) and (8b) is a more recent development (cf. Householder 1986: 149-156).[2]

(7) a. **Who** did you see? (*who* = object of the verb *see*)
b. **Who** did you talk to? (*who* = object of the stranded preposition *to*)

(8) a. Could you identify the man [**who** you'd seen outside the building]?
b. I saw the man [**who** you told me about].

Thus, the same author may use *who* in interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or stranded preposition, but still favour *whom* in a corresponding relative (Klima 1964: 3f; Traugott 1972: 127; Householder 1986: 149).[3]

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[2] Examples (7a) and (8b) are taken from Traugott (1972: 125f).

[3] As we will see in Section 3.8, the use of *wh*-pronouns in headed relatives is a comparatively recent development. In Middle English, headed relatives tended to be introduced by the complementizers *ðe* and *ðæt*. *Wh*-pronouns first appeared in non-subject relatives, and Shakespeare still exhibits a clear preference for *that* in restrictive subject relatives. In Present-Day English, restrictive subject relatives may be introduced either by a *wh*-pronoun or by *that*. When the relativised constituent is the object of a verb or a stranded preposition, on the other hand, the relative clause tends to occur without an overt relative marker (i)-(ii) (cf. Sigley 1997: 273 for detailed figures from the Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English).

(i) Could you identify the man [you'd seen outside the building].
(ii) I saw the man [you told me about].

The different histories of *wh*-pronouns in relative clauses and questions are likely to have contributed to the case differences between relative and interrogative *wh*-pronouns reported by Klima (1964), Traugott (1972), and Householder (1986).

(9) The case forms of interrogative versus relative *wh*-pronouns in an intermediate style proposed by Klima (1964: 3 fn.3) and Householder (1986: 149)[4]

wh-forms favoured in **matrix questions**

a. **Who** could she see?
b. **Who** did he speak with?
c. With **whom** did he speak?

wh-forms favoured in **embedded questions**

d. He knew [**who** she could see].
e. He knew [**who** he spoke with].
f. He knew [with **whom** he spoke].

wh-forms favoured in headed **relative clauses**

g. The leader [**whom** she could see] left.
h. The leader [**whom** he spoke with] left.
i. The leader [with **whom** he spoke] left.

The alternation between *who* and *whom* in questions and relatives contrasts sharply with the obligatory occurrence of the genitive *whose* whenever the *wh*-pronoun modifies a noun in a noun phrase (10)-(12).

(10) a. [**Whose** novel] did they publish last Easter?
b. * [**Who** novel] did they publish last Easter?
c. * [**Whom** novel] did they publish last Easter?

(11) a. I don't know [[**whose** novel] they published last Easter].
b. * I don't know [[**who** novel] they published last Easter].
c. * I don't know [[**whom** novel] they published last Easter].

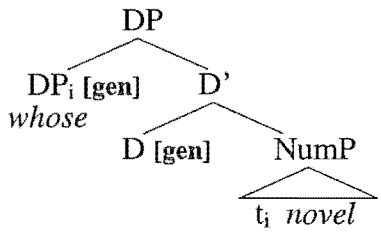
(12) a. the writer [[**whose** novel] they published last Easter]
b. * the writer [[**who** novel] they published last Easter]
c. * the writer [[**whom** novel] they published last Easter]

In the approach proposed here, the consistent selection of *whose* in (10)-(12) falls out from the convergence of Positional Case (Pos-Case) and Argument Case (Arg-Case) requirements (cf. Section 2.3.4). The Arg-Case constraint requires the *wh*-pronoun to surface in its genitive form because it is not the highest structural

[4] According to Householder (1986: 152), the distribution of *who* and *whom* in Shakespeare's works indicates that Shakespeare was a speaker of this intermediate dialect.

argument of the noun *novel*.[5] For DPs that occupy [Spec, DP] at Spell-Out, the genitive form imposed by the Arg-Case constraint is further reinforced by genitive Pos-Case checking with D (13).[6]

(13) Tree diagram illustrating genitive Pos-Case checking between D and a *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, DP]



Since this analysis can account for the distribution of *whose* in the various *wh*-constructions discussed here, the remainder of this chapter will focus on the distribution of *who* and *whom*. As mentioned above, variation between *who* and *whom* first occurred in interrogative contexts. I will therefore look at pronoun case trends in different types of *wh*-questions (Sections 3.2-3.6), before considering the distribution of *wh*-forms in free and headed relatives (Sections 3.7 and 3.8).

3.2 *wh*-pronouns in matrix questions

3.2.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

Both traditional grammars and empirical studies of *wh*-forms in Modern English agree that *who* is obligatory in matrix interrogatives questioning the subject of a finite clause (14).

(14) a. **Who** won the race?
b. * **Whom** won the race?

---

[5] As discussed in Section 2.1.1, the highest structural argument of a noun is referential, and is usually θ-bound by a noun-related functional category. Since θ-binding does not have any effect on the feature specification of the remaining arguments, any structural argument resulting from the projection of the TELIC or AGENTIVE quale will bear the feature [+ higher], regardless of whether the referential argument of the noun is structurally realised (as in the small clause *She a beauty!*) or not.

[6] As mentioned in Section 2.2.2.3, I am assuming that definite noun phrases contain both a NumP- and a DP-layer, in addition to the NP core. Since a DP is only able to check Pos-Case when its surface position differs from its θ-position, the *wh*-pronoun must have raised to [Spec, DP] from a position within NumP, in order to be able to check genitive Pos-Case with D.

However, there is a noticeable divergence between prescriptive norms and actual usage in *wh*-interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or preposition. While prescriptive grammars tend to dictate the use of the objective *wh*-form *whom* whenever the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb (15a) or preposition (15b-c), naturally occurring instances of *whom* in matrix questions are extremely rare in Present-Day English (cf. Klima 1964: 1-4; Householder 1986: 155f; Lasnik & Sobin 2000: 343-347).

(15) *wh*-usage dictated by prescriptive grammars

a. **Whom** did you see?
b. **Whom** did he speak <u>with</u>?
c. <u>With</u> **whom** did he arrive?

As Lasnik & Sobin (2000: 353, 356) point out, the interrogative pronoun most readily surfaces as *whom* when it occurs with a pied-piped preposition (16), and when it immediately follows a verb or preposition in multiple *wh*-questions (17).

(16) Example illustrating the difference between matrix *wh*-interrogatives with preposition-stranding and pied-piping

Who does this shop belong <u>to</u>? I mean [<u>to</u> **whom** does this shop belong]?
(George Bernard Shaw, *Too true to be good*, Tauchnitz 1935: 154)
[Jespersen 1946: 484]

(17) Examples of *whom* in multiple *wh*-questions

a. Who saw **whom**?
b. Who spoke <u>with</u> **whom**?
c. Who considers **whom** (to be) underpaid?
(Lasnik & Sobin 2000: 353, 356)

Who is clearly favoured in simple matrix interrogatives questioning the object of a verb (18) or the object of a stranded preposition (cf. (16) and (19)).

(18) Instances of *who* in matrix *wh*-interrogatives questioning the object of a verb

a. **UUho** haue ye there, my Lordes?
(Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*, Breymann & Wagner's edition, Heilbronn 1885-1887: 4190) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 242]

b. **who** can he mean by that?
(Richard B. Sheridan, *Dramatic works*, Tauchnitz: 48)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 242]

(19) Instances of *who* in matrix *wh*-interrogatives questioning the object of a stranded preposition

a. **Who** does it come <u>from</u>? ... Do you know who it is from?
(Oliver Goldsmith, Globe ed., London 1889: 668)
[Jespersen 1946: 484]

b. **Who** have you smil'd <u>with</u>?
(John Keats, *The complete works*, ed. Buxton Forman, Glasgow 1900: 5.180) [Jespersen 1946: 484]

3.2.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

As discussed in Chapter 2, all structural arguments of a predicate are affected by the Arg-Case constraint, which requires the overt case-form of an argument to be compatible with its relative position on the argument hierarchy.

The Arg-Case constraint makes the following case-predictions for *wh*-pronouns in matrix questions:

(a) When the questioned constituent is the subject of a finite clause, the *wh*-pronoun must surface in the nominative form *who* (20), because the subject is the highest structural argument of verb.

(20) **Who** won the race?

(b) When the questioned constituent is the object of a verb or preposition (and thus not the highest argument of a predicate), the *wh*-pronoun must surface in the objective form *whom* (21)-(22), because the objective is the only case available to lower arguments of [- N] predicates.

(21) **Whom** did you see?

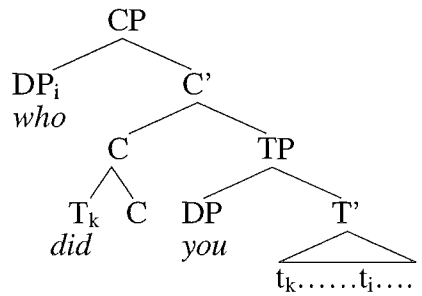
(22) a. **Whom** did she speak <u>with</u>?
b. <u>With</u> **whom** did she speak?

The Arg-Case constraint predicts that the distribution of *wh*-forms in matrix questions will always follow the usage prescribed in traditional grammars (cf. (14)-(15), (17), and (20)-(22)). It is unable to account for the general trend towards *who* wherever the *wh*-pronoun is not immediately preceded by a verb or preposition (cf. (16), and (18)-(19)).

The obvious relevance of surface position to the case of *wh*-pronouns points to the involvement of the Pos-Case constraint and the Default Case constraint (Def-Case), both of which make an explicit link between case and surface position. Pos-Case restricts the case forms of arguments appearing in the specifier of certain agreement-related functional heads at Spell-Out. Def-Case requires overtly-case marked noun phrases to surface in their objective form when they are unable to enter into Pos-Case checking. Since Def-Case predicts the occurrence of the objective form *whom* wherever it applies, we will have to rely on Pos-Case to account for the popularity of initial *who* in matrix questions if we want to maintain a purely case-based approach to the distribution of *wh*-forms.

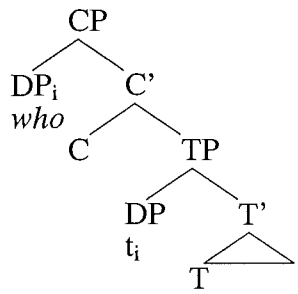
Sentence-initial *wh*-phrases are generally assumed to occupy [Spec, CP] at Spell-Out. In matrix interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or preposition, the *wh*-pronoun is always followed by a finite auxiliary (e.g. *did*), which is assumed to have undergone T-to-C raising (23). In subject questions, no T-to-C raising takes place, and C remains empty (24).[7]

(23) Tree diagram illustrating the position of the *wh*-pronoun in questions such as *Who did you see?* and *Who did you talk with?*



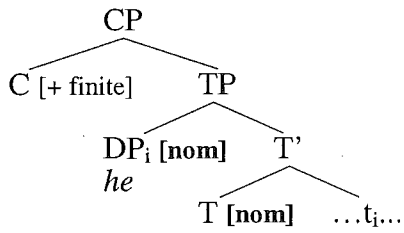
[7] See Rizzi (1996: 63-69) for a discussion of the surface position of *wh*-phrases and finite auxiliaries in matrix questions.

(24) Tree diagram illustrating the position of the *wh*-pronoun in questions such as *Who won the race?*



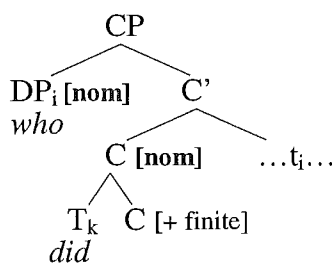
If we want to account for the occurrence of *who* in (23) and (24) in terms of Pos-Case requirements, we will have to argue that finite C is able to check nominative case on a DP in [Spec, CP]. The association between finite C and nominative case checking was already noted in Chapter 2, where finite C was assumed to endow T with the ability to check nominative Pos-Case on a DP in [Spec, TP] (25).

(25) Finite C and T combine to check nominative Pos-Case on a DP in [Spec, TP]



If we assume that nominative case checking always involves a collaboration between finite C and T, we would predict that an argument DP in [Spec, CP] should be able check nominative Pos-Case when T has raised to C (26).[8]

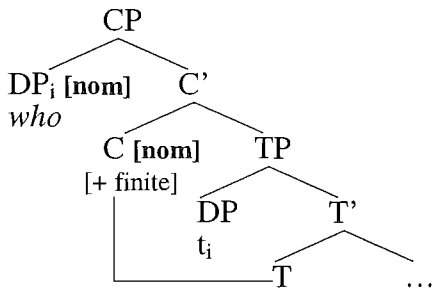
(26) Finite C and raised T combine to check nominative Pos-Case on a DP in [Spec, CP]



[8] Compare Jespersen & Haislund's (1949: 243) suggestion that 'the tendency to replace *whom* by *who*' is particularly strong in (matrix) questions, because the *wh*-pronoun is immediately followed by the verb.

The consistent selection of *who* in subject questions indicates that finite C also acquires the ability to check nominative case on its specifier, when no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out (27).[9]

(27) Finite C and T combine to check nominative Pos-Case on a DP in [Spec, CP] when no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out



Further support for the analysis proposed here comes from the case of subject pronouns that follow the finite auxiliary in matrix questions and other types of clauses that involve T-to-C raising.

3.3 The case of subject pronouns after fronted auxiliaries

3.3.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

As noted in Section 1.4, 1pl subject pronouns sometimes surface in their objective form *(u)s* when they follow a fronted auxiliary in Early Modern English (28)-(29).

(28) Early Modern English examples of *(u)s* after *shall* in questions and exhortatives

a. Say, where shall's lay him (Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*: IV. ii. 233)
[Gelderen 1997: 68]

b. Shall's geld him. (Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, ed. Glover and Waller, Cambridge 1905 [1607-11]: 1.139)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 256]

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[9] Following suggestions by Bobaljik (1994: 1f, 7f) and Bošković (2000: 75), we could argue that the surface adjacency between C and T leads to a PF merger of the features contained in these two heads, and thus endows C with the ability to check nominative Pos-Case. (PF = Phonological Form)

(29) Early Modern English example of *us* after *must* in a sentence involving a preposed adverbial

hens must **vs** flee (*The Towneley Plays*, ed. English, EETS 1897: 31) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 256]

A similar trend can be found in varieties of English spoken in the south-west of England (cf. Ihalainen 1991: 106 & 1994: 230f). According to Ihalainen (1991: 106), 1pl and 3pl pronouns consistently surface in their nominative forms *we* and *they* when they appear as the (preverbal) subject of a declarative sentence in Somerset English. In questions, on the other hand, objective forms such as *us* and *'em* 'are almost the rule' for subject pronouns (30).

(30) a. Didn'**s** get it? (Ihalainen 1994: 231)
b. We don't know, do **us**? (Wales 1996: 91)

Thomas Hardy's novels, which are set in the south-west of England, contain examples of objective 1pl and 3pl forms in exactly the same context (31).

(31) a. Let's look into Warren's, shall **us**, neighbours?
(Thomas Hardy, *Far from the madding crowd*, London 1906: 438)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 257]

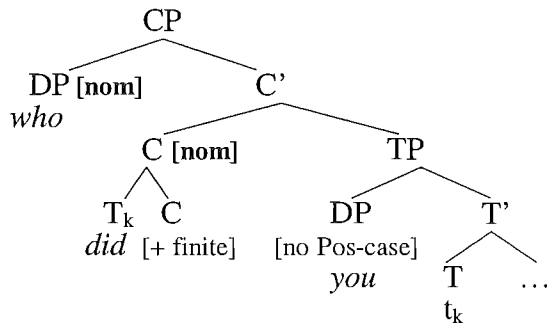
b. They move his soul; don't **'em**, father?
(Thomas Hardy, *Under the greenwood tree*: 70)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 257]

3.3.2 A possible case-based analysis

As discussed above, nominative Pos-Case checking always involves a collaboration between finite C and T in the approach proposed here. In Section 3.2.2, I argued that T-to-C raising endows a finite C with the ability to check nominative Pos-Case on a DP in [Spec, CP]. If we assume that Pos-Case checking is limited to one specifier position per head or combination of heads in any given

derivation,[10] then T-to-C raising will simultaneously result in the loss of nominative Pos-Case checking between T and a DP in [Spec, TP] (32).[11]

(32) Tree diagram illustrating the consequences of T-to-C raising for Pos-Case checking within CP and TP, when [Spec, CP] is occupied by a DP



[10] Note that the proposed approach to case checking is more restrictive than the approach outlined in Chomsky (1995: 286), which explicitly allows for the possibility that a head is involved in multiple instances of case checking.

[11] For a similar proposal, see Gelderen (1997). Gelderen (1997: 67f) argues that the occurrence of objective rather than nominative subject pronouns in (29)-(30), is due to the absence of an overt spec-head relationship between the subject pronoun and the finite verb. She also suggests that a finite verb that has raised to C will enter into feature-checking with the *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] (1997: 71). There are, however, two important differences between Gelderen's approach and my analysis:
(a) Gelderen (1997: 67, 71) assumes that the verb in C only checks verbal agreement with a *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP], whereas I am arguing that T-to-C raising endows C with the ability to check nominative Pos-Case on its specifier.
(b) In Gelderen's approach the verb in C checks the case of the subject pronoun under government (1997: 67f), whereas in my analysis, a subject pronoun in [Spec, TP] is unable to enter into any case checking relationship with C or T once T has raised to C.

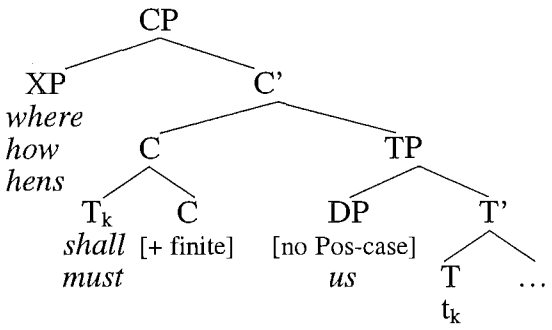
It is important to note that any raising of T to C will lead to the loss of Pos-Case checking between T and [Spec, TP], even when no actual case checking takes place between C and [Spec, CP]. A subject pronoun that follows a fronted finite auxiliary at Spell-Out will always be unable to check Pos-Case, no matter whether [Spec, CP] is

(a) filled with a DP (32),

(b) filled with an XP that may not be able to enter into Pos-Case checking (33), or

(c) completely absent at Spell-Out (34).[12]

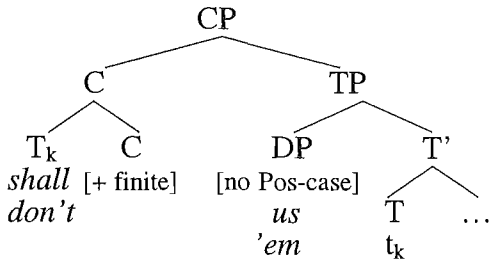
(33) Tree diagram illustrating the consequences of T-to-C raising for Pos-Case checking within TP, when [Spec, CP] is occupied by an XP that may not be able to enter into Pos-Case checking[13]



[12] As mentioned in Section 2.3.2, footnote 63, I am assuming that an agreement-related functional head will only be involved in Pos-Case checking if its specifier is occupied by an argument noun phrase at Spell-Out which has raised out of its θ-position. If no suitable noun phrase occupies the specifier position, the Pos-Case constraint is not applicable, and has no bearing on the convergence of the derivation. The analysis proposed here thus differs from a minimalist approach to case and agreement checking, where T must be involved in case checking in order for the derivation to converge. I would like to thank Liz Pearce (p.c.) for drawing my attention to this issue.

[13] Note that at least some of the fronted elements included in this group could be analysed as 'bare-NP adverbs' (cf. Larson 1985: 612f). If we adopt a 'bare-NP adverb' analysis for these initial constituents, and follow Larson (1985: 605f, 620) and Przepiórkowski (1998) in assuming that adverbial noun phrases should be treated as optional structural arguments of the verb, then they could be argued to check nominative Pos-Case with C (cf. (32)).

(34) Tree diagram illustrating the consequences of T-to-C raising for Pos-Case checking within TP, when [Spec, CP] is absent at Spell-Out



Since a pronoun in [Spec, TP] is unable to check Pos-Case when T appears in C at Spell-Out, the surface form of a subject pronoun that follows a fronted finite auxiliary will be influenced by the Default Case constraint (Def-Case) and the Argument Case constraint (Arg-Case). Arg-Case predicts that the subject pronoun should be nominative, because it is the highest argument of the predicate, whereas Def-Case requires the pronoun to surface in its objective form.

The occurrence of *us* and *'em* after the fronted auxiliaries in (28)-(31), could be captured by assuming that the Def-Case constraint is more influential than the Arg-Case constraint in Early Modern English and south-western English. In most varieties of Present-Day English, however, Arg-Case would appear to outweigh Def-Case, and lone subject pronouns consistently surface in their nominative case forms, even when they follow a fronted auxiliary (35).

(35) a. Who did **she** talk to?
b. Where shall **we** put him?
c. They move your soul, don't **they**?

3.4 *wh*-pronouns in echo questions

3.4.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

As noted in Section 3.2.1, the objective *wh*-form *whom* is most likely to occur after a lexical verb or preposition in matrix questions. However, this does not mean that *whom* is obligatory in these contexts. According to Gelderen (1997: 81f), the use of *who* after verbs and prepositions is particularly common in echo questions (36)-(37).[14]

(36) Examples of echo questions where the *wh*-pronoun is preceded by a lexical verb

a. I've seen her. - Seen **who**?
b. I saw Elvis yesterday. - You saw **who**?

(37) Instances of *who* in echo questions where the *wh*-pronoun is immediately preceded by a preposition

a. What do you think of him? - "Think <u>of</u> **who**?" inquired Mrs. Squeers; who (as she often remarked) was no grammarian, thank Heaven (Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*, London 1900 (Macmillan) [1839]: 62) [Jespersen 1946: 484f]

b. How the devil are we to get at them? ... Get <u>at</u> **who**, said I, in the London idiom. (H.G. Wells, *The world of William Clissold*, London 1926: 161) [Jespersen 1946: 485]

c. What did you do with my lecture notes? - I gave them to Jason. - You gave them to **who**?

3.4.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

The occurrence of the nominative *who* after verbs and prepositions is difficult to account for in a purely case-based approach. None of the three case constraints introduced in Chapter 2 is able to predict the occurrence of a nominative form in this environment:
The Arg-Case constraint predicts that any object of a verb or preposition should surface in the objective case.

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[14] Note that the preference for *who* is evident both in echo questions asking for clarification (cf. (36a) and (37a-b)), and in echo questions expressing surprise and disbelief (cf. (36b) and (37c)).

The Pos-Case constraint predicts that any *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, *v*P] will check objective case.
The Def-Case constraint predicts that any *wh*-pronoun in a position not covered by Pos-Case will surface in the objective form *whom*.

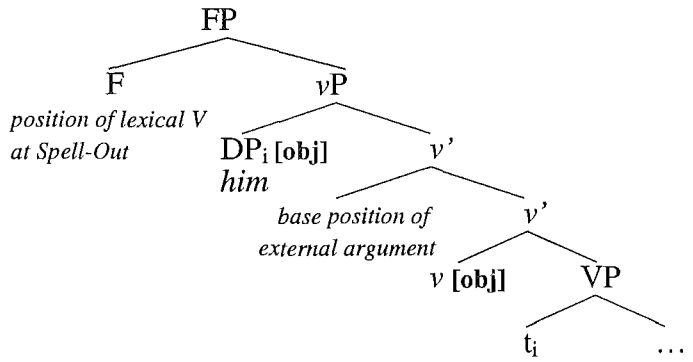
The popularity of *who* in echo questions thus suggests that the distribution of *wh*-forms is at least partly influenced by factors other than case. Foremost among these factors appears to be a tendency towards the use of *who* in all *wh*-positions (cf. Gelderen 1997: 81f; Lasnik & Sobin 2000).

If we assume that the surface form of a pronoun is determined by the interaction of all constraints that apply in a given context, then we would expect the influence of non-case factors to be particularly pronounced in positions where case is less influential. The pronoun data discussed in Chapter 2 and Sections 3.2-3.3, indicate that Arg-Case and Def-Case are both weaker than Pos-Case in Present-Day English. Pronouns that appear in positions covered only by Arg-Case and/or Def-Case, should therefore be more susceptible to non-case influences than pronouns in Pos-Case positions.

As discussed in Section 2.2.3, prepositional phrases do not contain any agreement-related functional head that could check Pos-Case on the object of the preposition. Any object of a preposition that appears within its PP at Spell-Out, will therefore be affected only by Arg-Case and Def-Case requirements, and may be influenced by the general tendency towards *who*.

The ready occurrence of *who* after verbs as well as prepositions in echo questions, suggests that a *wh*-pronoun in post-verbal position is just as susceptible to non-case influences as the object of a preposition. This similarity between *wh*-objects of verbs and prepositions would seem to indicate that post-verbal *wh*-pronouns do not occupy a Pos-Case position in echo questions.
In Section 2.2.2.1, I argued that any (non-deictic) pronominal object of a verb raises to [Spec, *v*P] before Spell-Out, and checks objective Pos-Case in this position (38).

(38) Tree diagram illustrating the position of pronominal objects of a verb at Spell-Out



The primary evidence for the overt movement of pronominal objects came from V-particle constructions: while full noun phrases can appear both before and after the particle (39), lone pronouns are generally confined to pre-particle position (40).[15]

(39) a. Betsy threw out **her boyfriend**.
b. Betsy threw her **boyfriend** out.

(40) a. * Betsy threw out **him**.
b. Betsy threw **him** out.

If we assume that the particle heads its own phrase (TelP) which intervenes between *v*P nd VP at Spell-Out, then any phrase that precedes the particle must have raised at least as high as [Spec, *v*P].[16] Phrases that follow the particle, on the other hand, will occupy a VP-internal position, and will be unable to check objective Pos-Case.

As (41) illustrates, *wh*-pronouns in echo questions tend to appear after the particle in a V-particle construction.[17]

(41) a. She's thrown him out. - Thrown out **who**?
b. On the way back, we looked up Helen and Peter. - You looked up **who**?

---

[15] The examples are adapted from Johnson (1991: 593f).

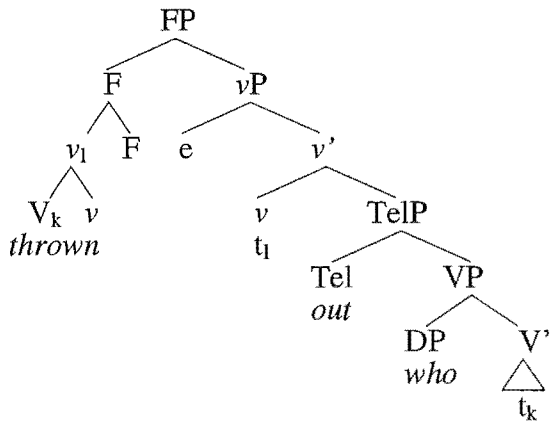
[16] As mentioned in Section 2.2.2.1, footnote 35, I am assuming that Tel is unable to project a specifier, which means that TelP cannot serve as a possible landing site for object movement.

[17] *Thrown who out?* seems possible in (41a), but *Thrown out who?* feels more natural. Liz Pearce (p.c.) notes that this word order preference extends to multiple *wh*-questions:

(i) Who threw whom out? [list/information question]
(ii) ? Who threw out who? [echo/contrast question]

This suggests that *wh*-pronouns do not undergo obligatory movement to [Spec, *v*P] in echo questions, and are thus able to appear in a surface position not covered by Pos-Case (42).[18]

(42) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of the *wh*-pronoun in the echo question *Thrown out who?*



3.5 *wh*-pronouns in embedded questions

3.5.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

The distribution of *wh*-forms in embedded questions strongly resembles the distribution of *who* and *whom* in matrix interrogatives. Thus, *who* appears to be obligatory when the questioned constituent is the subject of a finite clause (43), and readily occurs as the fronted object of a verb (44) or stranded preposition (45).

(43) a. I don't know [**who** won the race].
b. * I don't know [**whom** won the race].

[18] Compare Gelderen's (1997: 82) suggestion that *whom* is more likely to appear when the *wh*-pronoun moves through [Spec, Agr_OP] before Spell-Out.

(44) Examples of *who* in embedded *wh*-interrogatives questioning the object of a verb[19]

a. Espy her loves and [**who** she liketh best] (Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. Ward, Oxford 1887 [ab. 1590]: 1.143) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 242]

b. We want to know [**who** you've got in this house, at present] (Charles Dickens, *Pickwick Papers*, London 1890 (Chapman & Hall) [1837f]: 101) [Jespersen 1946: 496]

(45) Examples of *who* in embedded *wh*-interrogatives questioning the object of a stranded preposition

a. now I see [**who** he laughed at] (Ben Jonson, the Mermaid Series: 1.17) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 242]

b. Who does it come from? ... Do you know [**who** it is from]? (Oliver Goldsmith, Globe ed., London 1889: 668) [Jespersen 1946: 484]

c. how can he tell [**who** it was intended for]? (George Bernard Shaw, *Plays pleasant*, London 1898: 84) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 242]

Whom is most likely to appear immediately after a preposition, either in a pied-piping construction (46), or when the PP appears in situ in a multiple *wh*-question (47).

(46) Examples of *whom* in embedded *wh*-interrogatives questioning the object of a pied-piped preposition

a. If you did know [to **whom** I gave the ring], If you did know, [for **whom** I gave the ring] (Shakespeare, *The merchant of Venice*: V. i. 193) [Jespersen 1946: 484]

b. it is only a question of [with **whom** I shall do so] (Grant Allen, *The woman who did*, Tauchnitz, 1895: 81) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 48]

---

[19] See Jespersen (1949 [1927]: 73) for a discussion of the difference between embedded *wh*-interrogatives and free relatives after verbs of perception, knowledge, narration, remembrance, and utterance.

(47) Examples of *whom* after P in embedded multiple *wh*-interrogatives

a. He ... do's appoint [Who lyes with **whom**; and at what hour]
(Ben Jonson, *The alchemist*, ed. L.M. Hathaway, New York 1903: II. 515)
[Jespersen 1946: 494]

b. to know ... [who was smitten with **whom** at Vienna]
(William M. Thackeray, *The Newcomes*, London 1901 [1853]: 586)
[Jespersen 1946: 494]

While matrix *wh*-questions with *whom* in initial position appear to be extremely rare in Modern English, initial *whom* does occur in some of the embedded *wh*-interrogatives cited in existing studies. Jespersen (1946 & 1949 [1927]) offers examples of initial *whom* in embedded questions with preposition stranding (48), and in embedded questions involving identificational *be* (49).

(48) Example of initial *whom* in an embedded *wh*-interrogative questioning the object of a stranded preposition, where the interrogative is the complement of a preposition

the thought of [**whom** it hath recourse to]
(John Milton, *Areopagitica*, ed. Hales, Oxford: 1)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 48]

(49) Examples of initial *whom* in embedded questions involving identificational *be*[20]

a. then I know [**whom** you are]
(Hall Caine, *The Christian*, London 1897: 422) [Jespersen 1946: 483f]

b. She did not know [**whom** this strange young man might be]
(Hugh Walpole, *Fortitude*, [1913]: 138) [Jespersen 1946: 484]

3.5.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

Arg-Case predictions for *wh*-case in embedded questions are identical to Arg-Case predictions for *wh*-case in matrix questions:

---

[20] As noted in Section 2.2.2.1, identificational *be* takes two individual arguments. Since the embedded questions in (49) target the lower of the two arguments, the *wh*-pronoun is followed by the subject rather than the verb. For a more detailed discussion of the syntactic and semantic properties of identificational *be*, see Section 4.5.1.

(a) When the questioned constituent is the subject, and thus the highest argument of the verb, the *wh*-pronoun will surface in the nominative form *who* (50).

(50) I don't know [**who** won the race].

(b) When the questioned constituent is the object of a verb or preposition, the *wh*-pronoun will take the objective form *whom* (51).

(51) a. Find out [**whom** she likes]!

b. Do you know [with **whom** he left]?

c. Do you know [**whom** he left with]?

The same goes for the lower argument of identificational *be* (52a), although we could argue that the coreferentiality between the two arguments in an identificational sentence could lead to nominative Arg-Case agreement between the higher and the lower argument (52b).[21]

(52) a. I know [**whom** he is].

b. I know [**who** he is].

Unlike the Arg-Case constraint, the Pos-Case constraint makes quite different predictions for the distribution of *wh*-forms in matrix and in embedded questions. The main difference between matrix questions and embedded questions is the relative order of *wh*-pronoun, finite verb, and subject. While the *wh*-pronoun is always followed by a finite auxiliary in a matrix interrogative questioning the lower argument of a verb or preposition (53), the subject intervenes between the *wh*-pronoun and the finite verb in a corresponding embedded question (54).

(53) a. **Who** did you see?

b. **Who** are you?

c. **Who** did you talk to?

---

[21] In Section 4.5.1.2, I will argue that the present-day preference for *who* in identificational questions is more plausibly analysed as arising from the general trend towards invariant *who*. If the use of *who* was due to Arg-Case agreement with the higher argument of *be*, we would expect to find a preference for nominative pronoun forms after *be* in all declarative identificational sentences. As we will see in Section 4.5.1.1, there is little evidence for such Arg-Case agreement in Present-Day English, which suggests that the use of *who* in (52b) is triggered by something else.

(54) a. Tell them [**who** you saw]!
b. I know [**who** you are].
c. I know [**who** you talked to].

Only subject questions exhibit the same word order in matrix and embedded contexts (55).

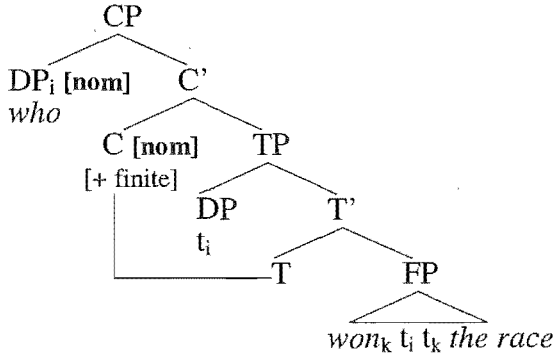
(55) a. **Who** won the race?
b. Do you know [**who** won the race]?

In Section 3.2.2, I argued that the preference for initial *who* in matrix questions arises from nominative Pos-Case checking between finite C and the *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP]. There are two ways in which finite C can acquire the ability to check nominative Pos-Case on its specifier:

(a) through T-to-C raising (in matrix interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or preposition)
(b) through surface adjacency between C and T (in subject questions)

As (56) illustrates, no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out in embedded subject questions, which means that finite C is able to check nominative Pos-Case on the *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP]. The case status of the *wh*-pronoun in embedded subject questions is thus identical to the case status of the *wh*-pronoun in matrix subject questions.

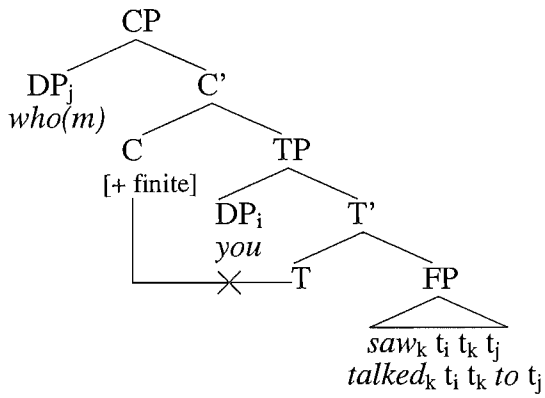
(56) Tree diagram which illustrates nominative Pos-Case checking between finite C and a *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] in the subject question *who won the race*[22]



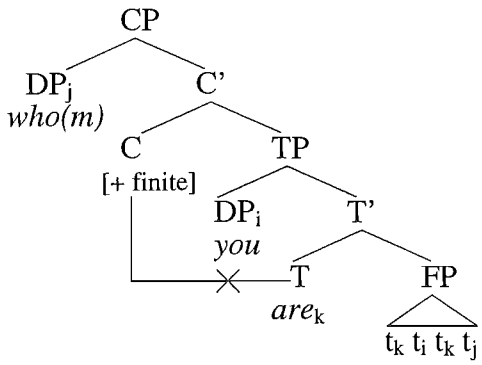
[22] FP = maximal projection of the functional head the lexical verb occupies at Spell-Out. As discussed in Section 2.2.2.1, I am assuming that the lexical verb always undergoes overt movement to a functional head beyond *v*P in Present-Day English. The verb therefore precedes the lowest trace of the subject DP in the tree diagram.

In embedded interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or preposition, C is unable to check nominative Pos-Case on its specifier, because the subject of the clause intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out (57). The same goes for embedded interrogatives questioning the lower argument of identificational *be* (58).

(57) Tree diagram which illustrates why C is unable to check nominative Pos-Case on its specifier in embedded interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or stranded preposition



(58) Tree diagram which illustrates why C is unable to check nominative Pos-Case on its specifier in embedded interrogatives questioning the lower argument of identificational *be*[23]



Since the *wh*-pronoun in (57) and (58) does not occupy a Pos-Case position at Spell-Out, its surface form will be constrained by Def-Case (as well as Arg-Case).

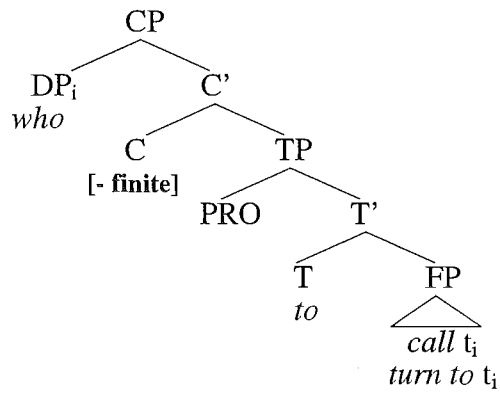
[23] As mentioned in Section 2.2.2.1 (footnotes 37-38), I am assuming that the functional head F is associated with the tense-aspect system rather than the argument structure of a verb. It is therefore present even in identificational sentences, which lack a *v*P-layer. Like other lexical verbs, identificational *be* must raise at least as far as F before Spell-Out. However, because of its auxiliary qualities, *be* may undergo further raising to T and C.

While the examples in Section 3.5.1 contain only finite questions, embedded interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or preposition may also be non-finite (59).

(59) a. They'll tell you [**who** to call].
b. She didn't know [**who** to turn to].

In these non-finite questions, no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out. However, C is still unable to check nominative Pos-Case on the *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP], because it lacks finiteness (60).[24]

(60) Tree diagram which illustrates why C is unable to check nominative Pos-Case on its specifier in non-finite embedded questions



The *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] thus occupies a surface position not covered by Pos-Case, and is subject to Def-Case and Arg-Case requirements.

Both the Def-Case and the Arg-Case constraint call for initial *whom* in finite and non-finite embedded interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or stranded preposition. They can thus account for the occurrence of *whom* in sentences like (48)-(49), but are unable to predict the even greater popularity of *who* in the same contexts (cf. (44)-(45), (54) & (59)). In Section 3.4.2, I suggested that the occurrence of *who* after a verb or preposition in echo-questions is due to the influence of factors other than case. The most important non-case factor identified so far, is a general tendency towards *who* in all *wh*-positions. As discussed in Section 3.4.2, this tendency towards *who* will be particularly pronounced in positions not covered by Pos-Case, because Arg-Case and Def-Case tend to be weaker than Pos-Case in Present-Day English. The variation between initial *who*

[24] As discussed in Section 2.2.2.2, non-finite C can only participate in Pos-Case checking when it is filled with the complementizer *for* at Spell-Out.

and *whom* in interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or stranded preposition, could thus be analysed as the result of competition between the demands of Arg-Case and Def-Case, on the one hand, and the tendency towards invariant *who*, on the other.[25]

3.6 *wh*-pronouns in sluicing constructions

3.6.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

The most common examples of sluicing cited in the literature involve *wh*-pronouns that appear either before or after a preposition. Lasnik & Sobin (2000: 345f) point out that the nominative *who* is virtually obligatory when the *wh*-pronoun precedes the preposition in a sluiced matrix clause (61). When the *wh*-pronoun follows the preposition, on the other hand, both *whom* and *who* occur in the data reported in existing studies (61)-(62).[26]

(61) Examples illustrating the distribution of *wh*-forms in sluiced matrix questions where the *wh*-pronoun is the object of a preposition

a. '... that gaby Mary Ramsbottom has got herself engaged.' ... '**Who** to?' demanded Tommy. 'You mean "to **whom**". The preposition governs the objective case,' corrected her James Douglas McTear ... who himself wrote English better than he spoke it.
(Jerome K. Jerome, *Tommy & Co*, London [1904]: 71)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 242]

b. she fell in love ... - How do you know - **who** with - where is she - ? ... But in love - with **whom**?
(Farnol, *The amateur gentleman*, London [1913]: 274)
[Jespersen 1946: 485]

c. You can get married if you wish. - **Who** to? - To **whom**? Oh, anyone
(George Bernard Shaw, *Too true to be good*, Tauchnitz 1935: 154)
[Jespersen 1946: 484]

---

[25] The proposed approach closely resembles Klima's (1964) analysis of the distribution of *wh*-forms in different styles of English. Klima (1964: 13-17) suggests that the choice of *who* rather than *whom* in interrogatives and relatives questioning the object of a verb or stranded preposition, is due to a delay in the application of case-marking until after the pronoun has undergone '*wh*-attachment', which corresponds to *wh*-movement in current approaches. Since Klima assumes that objective case is assigned under adjacency to V or P, pronouns that have undergone *wh*-movement will fail to be assigned objective case and surface in their unmarked form. For the personal *wh*-pronoun, the unmarked form is assumed to be *who* (Klima 1964: 12).

[26] Cf. also Lobeck (1995: 54) and Merchant (2001: 92 n.3). As Diane Massam (p.c.) points out, it is important to note that the examples in (61) are all taken from 20th century texts, while the examples in (62) date back to the 16th-18th century. The examples in (61) and (62) can thus not be seen as evidence for synchronic variation between *who* and *whom* after prepositions in sluiced questions.

(62) Examples of *who* after a preposition in sluiced matrix questions

a. hee is in loue, With **who**?
(Shakespeare, *Much ado about nothing*: I. i. 214) [Jespersen 1946: 484]

b. yeeld thee, theefe. - To **who**? to thee?
(Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*: IV. ii. 76) [Jespersen 1946: 484]

c. A history! of **who**? (Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy and A sentimental journey*, London 1911 [1759-67] (Macmillan): 1.76)
[Jespersen 1946: 484]

As the examples in (63) illustrate, instances of *who* before and after prepositions are not confined to sluiced matrix questions.

(63) Examples of *who* before and after prepositions in sluiced embedded questions

a. I heard yesterday that she'd run away. I wasn't told [**who** with]
(Stephen McKenna, *Sonia married*, London 1918: 200)
[Jespersen 1946: 485]

b. I am going to Gretna Green, and if you cannot guess [with **who**], I shall think you a simpleton
(Jane Austen, *Pride and prejudice*, London 1894 [1813]: 356)
[Jespersen 1946: 484]

In embedded sluicing constructions questioning the subject of a finite clause or the object of a verb, the nominative *who* is clearly favoured in Present-Day English (64)-(65). However, *whom* seems to be marginally possible, at least in some varieties of English (66).

(64) Examples of *who* in a sluiced embedded question where the questioned constituent is the subject of a finite clause

a. Mary thinks someone interesting is speaking tonight,
but she's not sure [**who**].[27]

b. Somebody left, but we don't know [**who**]. (Chao 1987: 104)

[27] Based on an example by Lobeck (1995: 54).

(65) Example of *who* in a sluiced embedded question where the questioned constituent is the object of a verb

John likes some girl but I don't know [**who**]. (Frazier & Clifton 1998: 500)

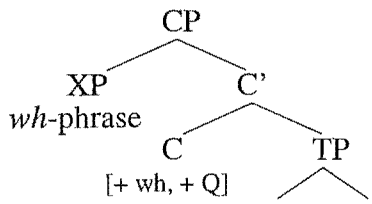
(66) Example of *whom* in a sluiced embedded question where the questioned constituent is the subject of a finite clause

Some one was close behind, I knew not [**whom**].
(Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, London (Cassell) [1882]: 171)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 223]

3.6.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

Most recent approaches to sluicing agree that sluiced questions are CPs containing a phonologically empty TP (67).[28]

(67)



However, there is some disagreement as to the syntactic content of TP at Spell-Out:

Chao (1987: 158), Lobeck (1995: 60), and Chung et al. (1995: 242) assume that the *wh*-phrase enters the derivation as [Spec, CP], and the TP complement of C is base-generated as an empty category, which lacks internal structure. In support of this analysis, Lobeck (1995: 58-60) draws attention to the absence of verbal agreement morphology on sluiced constituents in languages like Bavarian

[28] See Merchant (2001: 40-60) for a detailed discussion of arguments in favour of treating sluiced questions as CPs headed by an empty C specified for the features [+ wh] and [+ Q]. The feature [+ Q] captures the fact that sluicing can only occur in questions, and the feature [+ wh] ensures that sluiced questions always contain an overt *wh*-phrase in [Spec, CP] (cf. also Lobeck 1995: 50, and Frazier & Clifton 1998: 501).

German.[29] If we assume that overt agreement marking in C arises from a syntactic relationship between C and T, then the lack of verbal agreement morphology in sluiced questions will fall out naturally from the assumption that T is absent at Spell-Out.

A rather different approach to ellipsis, and sluicing in particular, is advocated by Merchant (2001). Merchant (2001: 60) argues that sluicing involves PF deletion licensed by feature checking between T and C.[30] In Merchant's approach, the full internal structure of the TP is present in the surface syntax but remains unpronounced, because the PF features of the various heads have been deleted. The absence of agreement morphology and overt complementizers in C is assumed to arise from prosodic constraints rather than a lack of syntactic structure at Spell-Out (Merchant 2001: 72f, 80-83, 230f).

Although the two approaches differ quite markedly in their assumptions about the syntactic properties of sluiced constituents, the differences in the surface syntax turn out to have little bearing on the predictions of the three case constraints proposed in Chapter 2.

As we have seen in preceding sections, finite C can acquire the ability to check nominative Pos-Case on its specifier through T-to-C raising, or through a PF merger under surface adjacency with T.[31] Neither of these will be possible if T is absent at Spell-Out, or if the PF features of T have been deleted.

---

[29] For example, in full embedded questions, the inflection *-st*, which marks 2sg agreement in Bavarian German, may show up on both the finite verb in T, and on the fronted *wh*-phrase introducing the embedded clause (i).

(i) Du woiddst doch kumma, owa mia wissn ned [wann-**st** (du) kumma woidd-**st**].
you wanted come, but we know not when-2sg you come wanted-2sg
'You wanted to come, but we don't know when you wanted to come.' (Lobeck 1995: 58)

In a corresponding sluiced question, on the other hand, the occurrence of *-st* on the *wh*-phrase is ungrammatical (ii).

(ii) Du woiddst doch kumma, owa mia wissn ned [wann (*-**st**)].
you wanted come, but we know not when
'You wanted to come, but we don't know when.' (Lobeck 1995: 59)

[30] PF deletion = deletion at Phonological Form.

[31] See footnotes 9 and 83 for more detail.

Both an empty TP approach and a PF deletion approach to sluicing will thus predict that C should be unable to check nominative Pos-Case in sluiced questions, which means that the *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] will be subject to Def-Case rather than Pos-Case.[32]

Since the predicate of any sluiced question must be present at Semantic Form to ensure the desired interpretation of the sluiced constituent (cf. Chao 1987: 65-74; Lobeck 1995: 32-35; Chung et al. 1995: 263f), *wh*-pronouns in sluicing constructions will be affected by Arg-Case requirements, no matter whether we adopt a PF-deletion approach to sluicing, or assume that TP lacks internal structure at Spell-Out.

While the Def-Case constraint calls for the objective form *whom* in all positions not covered by Pos-Case, the Arg-Case of a pronoun depends on its status on the argument hierarchy. In (64) and (66), the *wh*-pronoun is the highest argument of the predicate in the sluiced question, and would thus be required to take the nominative form *who* by the Arg-Case constraint. The marginal occurrence of the objective form *whom* in sentences like (66) could be seen as evidence that the Def-Case constraint may outweigh the Arg-Case constraint (in certain varieties of English).

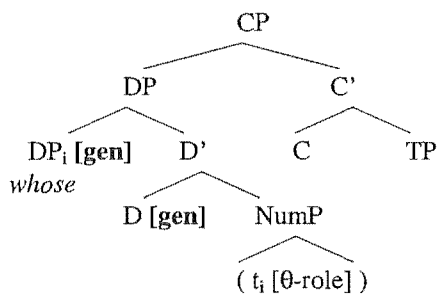
---

[32] The consistent selection of *whose* in sluiced questions like (i) suggests that the *wh*-pronoun is able to check genitive Pos-Case in this context.

(i) Somebody's car is parked on the lawn, but we don't know [**whose** / * who / * whom]. (Merchant 2001: 43)

As mentioned in Section 2.2.2.3 and Section 3.1, a DP can only check genitive Pos-Case if it appears in [Spec, DP] at Spell-Out and does not receive its θ-role in this position. If we assume that *whose* refers to the owner of the car, the genitive *wh*-pronoun in (i) occupies the specifier of the DP in [Spec, CP] at Spell-Out (ii), but receives its θ-role from its trace in [Spec, NumP], which is either present in the overt syntax, or reconstructed at LF.

(ii) Tree diagram illustrating Pos-Case checking between the *wh*-pronoun and D in sluiced questions involving the genitive *whose* (the brackets around the trace in NumP indicate that the trace of the *wh*-pronoun has to be present at some level of representation, but not necessarily at Spell-Out)



See Lobeck (1995: 85-96) for arguments in favour of assuming that a fully articulated NumP-layer is always present in noun phrases involving NP-ellipsis.

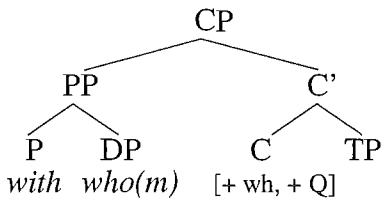
The general trend towards the nominative *who* in sluicing constructions is more problematic for a purely case-based approach. While the occurrence of *who* in sluiced subject questions like (64) is predicted by the Arg-Case constraint, neither Arg-Case nor Def-Case could predict the use of *who* in sluiced questions where the *wh*-pronoun is the object of a reconstructed verb or preposition. The distribution of *wh*-forms in sluiced questions thus provides further evidence for competition between the case constraints and a tendency towards invariant *who*.

An additional non-case factor appears to influence the choice of *wh*-forms in sluicing constructions where the sluiced constituent is the object of a preposition. As can be seen from the examples in (61), the preposition may either precede the *wh*-pronoun (pied-piping), or it may follow the pronoun (swiping).[33] When the preposition is pied-piped with the *wh*-pronoun, both *who* and *whom* occur, but when the preposition is swiped, only *who* seems possible (cf. Lasnik & Sobin 2000: 345f). This suggests that the position of the *wh*-pronoun relative to the preposition has some bearing on its surface form in sluiced questions.

The structure of sluicing constructions involving a pied-piped preposition (68) follows the structure of the relevant part of full questions, with the *wh*-pronoun contained in a PP that occupies [Spec, CP] (69).[34]

(68) Mary left with someone, but we don't know [<u>with</u> **who(m)**].
(Lobeck 1995: 60)

(69)



The syntactic structure of sluices involving swiping (70) is more problematic.

(70) Mary left with someone, but we don't know [**who** <u>with</u>]. (Lobeck 1995: 60)

In full questions, stranded prepositions are generally assumed to remain within TP when the *wh*-pronoun raises to [Spec, CP]. However, such an analysis would not appear to be available for swiped prepositions in sluiced questions, no matter whether we adopt an empty category or PF-deletion approach to ellipsis:

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[33] The term 'swiping' was coined by Merchant (2001: 123) and stands for *sluiced wh-phrase inversion with prepositions in Northern Germanic.*

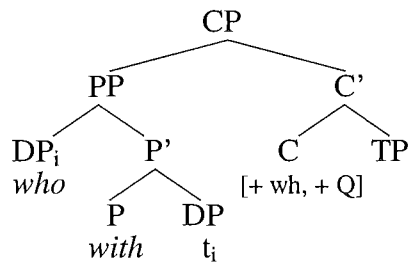
[34] See Lobeck (1995: 60f) for discussion.

If a sluiced *wh*-phrase is directly inserted into [Spec, CP] without prior movement, and the TP complement is base-generated as an empty category, a stranded preposition will not be able to occupy a TP-internal position in sluicing constructions.

If the *wh*-phrase is assumed to have undergone movement from within TP, but the phonological contents of TP are deleted at PF, then a preposition stranded within TP will remain unpronounced (cf. Merchant 2001: 91-107).

Lobeck (1995: 61f), following a proposal by Riemsdijk (1978), therefore suggests that a *wh*-pronoun preceding the preposition in a sluiced question occupies [Spec, PP] at Spell-Out (71).[35]

(71)



As discussed in Section 2.2.3, objects of prepositions are unable to check Pos-Case inside PP, because P is not an agreement related head, and there is little justification for positing additional functional projections within the prepositional phrase. Since the *wh*-pronoun appears within PP both in sluiced questions where the preposition is pied-piped (69), and in sluiced questions with P-stranding (71), we will not be able to appeal to differences in the applicability of the three case constraints when trying to account for the occurrence of *whom* in post-P but not pre-P position. In sluicing constructions, all *wh*-objects of prepositions will be influenced by Arg-Case and Def-Case (both of which call for *whom* in this context), regardless of whether they appear in pre-P or post-P position.

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[35] While only *wh*-pronouns seem to undergo PP-internal raising in Present Day English, Pintzuk (1996: 392, 295) argues that raising from [Comp, P] to [Spec, PP] is responsible for the occurrence of personal pronouns before an associated preposition in Late Old English prose texts (i).

(i) hwæðer hiera mehte maran fultum [**him** to] geteon
which *3pl.GEN* *might* *greater* *help* *3sgM.DAT* *to* *draw*
'...which of them might draw greater help to him.'
(*Orosius* 78.33-79.1) [Pintzuk 1996: 392]

As Kate Kearns (p.c.) points out, raising to [Spec, PP] is a possible source for the frozen expression *the whole world over*, and also appears to be available as a poetic device (ii).

(ii) ...and all her hair / in one long yellow string I wound / three times [her little throat around]
(Robert Browning, 'Porphyria's Lover' [1836])

I have been arguing that the ready occurrence of *who* in embedded and sluiced questions is largely due to a general trend towards invariant *who*. If this trend was the only non-case influence to compete with Arg-Case and Def-Case in sluicing constructions, we would expect to find the same degree of variation between *who* and *whom* when the *wh*-pronoun precedes an associated preposition as when it follows the preposition. The interaction of the case constraints with the trend towards invariant *who* is thus unable to account for the formal differences between pre-P and post-P *wh*-objects in sluiced questions.

In Chapter 8, I will argue that these differences in form are directly linked to differences in structural position. As can be seen from (69) and (71), pre-P and post-P *wh*-pronouns occupy different hierarchical positions within the PP: a *wh*-pronoun that precedes the P appears in [Spec, PP] at Spell-Out (71), while a *wh*-pronoun that follows the P appears in complement position at Spell-Out (69). The occurrence of *whom* in post-P but not pre-P position suggests that *wh*-phrases in complement position tend to surface as *whom*, while *wh*-phrases in specifier position are preferentially realised as *who*.

3.7 *wh*-pronouns in free relatives

In Old English and Middle English, *wh*-pronouns were largely confined to questions. The first *wh*-pronouns to appear in relative clauses formed part of the combination *swa hwa swa* 'so who so', which was used to introduce free relatives (Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 116; Allen 1980: 114).[36] During the Middle English period, the initial *swa* disappeared from this construction, and the second *swa* was often replaced with *that* or *ðe*, which could in turn be omitted, leaving only the *wh*-pronoun (Allen 1980: 207ff). At the same time, the adverb *ever* started to be used in free relatives without its temporal meaning. The increasing association of *ever* with the *wh*-phrase gradually lead to its reanalysis as part of the *wh*-pronoun (Allen 1980: 209ff, 387).

[36] As Allen (1980: 115) points out, the second *swa* in this construction could be separated from the *wh*-pronoun in Old English, which suggests that it is best analysed as a complementiser selected for by the *swa* that introduces the *wh*-phrase in a free relative.

Allen (1980: 114-121) distinguishes two types of free relatives, which have different case and preposition-stranding properties (cf. also Pintzuk 2000: 53f):

(a) **argument relatives**, which function as the argument of a matrix predicate

(b) **left-dislocated free relatives** that are associated with a 'returning' (or 'intrusive') pronoun in the matrix clause[37]

In Old and Middle English, the case of the *wh*-phrase in an **argument relative** was always determined by the function of the relative in the matrix clause, even when it disagreed with the function of the *wh*-phrase within the relative (cf. Allen 1980: 114f, 208f; Bresnan & Grimshaw 1978: 375; Pintzuk 2000: 53). For example, the *wh*-pronoun *wam* functions as the subject of the relative clause in (72), but the relative itself functions as the object of the matrix preposition *to*. Since the matrix case always wins out over the relative-internal case, the *wh*-pronoun in (72) surfaces in the objective form *wam*, rather than the nominative form *hwa*.[38]

(72) Đe holi gost ... hine dealeð to [**wam** him beoð
the holy ghost ... 3sgM.ACC gives to wh.OBJ 3sgM.OBJ is

lofue]
pleasing

'The holy ghost ... gives it to whomever is pleasing to him.'
(*Layamon (Otho)* 9081) [Allen 1980: 208]

When the *wh*-phrase functioned as the object of a preposition within an argument relative, preposition stranding appears to have been obligatory (73).[39]

(73) Ac seid to [**hwam** he wið spekeð], hwi sholde ich
but says to wh.OBJ 3sgM.NOM with speaks how should 1sg.NOM

him luuien?
3sgM.OBJ love

'But says to everyone he speaks with, "Why should I love him?"'
(*Old English Homilies 2*, XXIX, 183. 32) [Allen 1980: 209]

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[37] See Demirdache (1997: 198) for a discussion of the exact nature of the matrix pronoun associated with the dislocated constituent in left-dislocation structures.

[38] Key to the abbreviations used in the glosses in the following Old and Middle English examples: 1sg = first person singular pronoun, 2sg = second person singular pronoun, 3sgM = third person singular masculine pronoun, wh = *wh*-pronoun, ACC = accusative case, OBJ = objective case.

[39] See Allen (1980: 116, 145 n.14).

In **left-dislocated free relatives**, on the other hand, prepositions were obligatorily pied-piped (74), and the case of the *wh*-phrase always corresponded to its function within the relative clause (75).[40]

(74) Ðat is min red, [wið **quam** ðu is findes]$_i$, ðat
that is my advice with wh.OBJ 2sg.NOM them find that

he$_i$ be dead
3sgM.NOM be dead

'this is my advice: whoever you find them with, he should be killed'
(*Genesis & Exodus* 1768) [Allen 1980: 209]

(75) [**Hwam** ich biteche ðat bred ðat ich on wyne wete]$_i$,
wh.OBJ 1sg.NOM give the bread that 1sg.NOM in wine wet

he$_i$ me schal bitraye
3sgM.NOM 1sg.OBJ shall betray

'whoever I give the bread that I wet in wine, he shall betray me'
(*Jesus MS Passion* 103) [Allen 1980: 209]

While free relatives may still appear either as an argument of a matrix predicate or as a left-dislocated constituent in Modern English, preposition stranding is now possible in both types of constructions (cf. the Modern English translation in example (74)), and the distribution of *wh* case forms in free relatives is no longer as clear-cut as in Old and Middle English. As we will see in Sections 3.7.1 and 3.7.2, the form of the *wh*-pronoun in a Modern English argument relative may meet either matrix or relative-internal case requirements. What is more, both argument relatives and left-dislocated free relatives may be introduced by *wh*-pronouns whose case corresponds neither to the function of the *wh*-phrase within the relative clause nor to the function of the relative in the matrix clause.

In Modern English free relatives, the complex *wh*-forms *whoever, whomever, whoso(ever),* and *whomsoever* tend to be favoured over the simplex forms *who* and *whom* (cf. Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 62; Baker 1995:210f), except when the relative clause involves VP ellipsis (76) or Null Complement Anaphora (77).[41]

---

[40] In all of the examples involving left-dislocated free relatives, the free relative is coindexed with the intrusive/returning pronoun in the matrix clause.

[41] VP ellipsis typically occurs after modal verbs, while Null Complement Anaphora occurs with lexical verbs such as *like, please,* and *choose*. The most important differences and similarities between VP ellipsis and Null Complement Anaphora are outlined in Chao (1987: 104-176). A detailed discussion of VP ellipsis can be found in Lobeck (1995: 141-191).

(76) She had the art of pleasing [**whom** she would]
(Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, London 1867 [1852]: 122)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

(77) courting [**whom** she pleased] and ignoring all others[42]
(Theodore Dreiser, *Free, and other stories*, New York 1918: 63)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

Since the syntactic properties of free relatives with VP ellipsis (VPE) or Null Complement Anaphora (NCA) differ from the properties of other free relatives, I will first discuss the case trends and predictions for free relatives without ellipsis (Sections 3.7.1-3.7.3), and then take a closer look at VPE and NCA relatives in Sections 3.7.4 and 3.7.5.

3.7.1 Case trends in free relatives introduced by complex *wh*-pronouns

The most common complex *wh*-forms to occur in the Modern English examples collected by Jespersen (1949 [1927]), are the nominative *whoever*, and the objective form *whomsoever*. While the nominative is readily tolerated in a wide range of contexts, the objective form is largely confined to positions immediately following a verb or preposition.

Since pied-piping of prepositions remains ungrammatical in argument relatives,[43] the *wh*-pronoun introducing the argument relative will only follow a verb or preposition if the whole relative clause appears as the complement of a verb or preposition (78)-(79). While the use of *whom(so)ever* in this context may meet both matrix and relative-internal case requirements (78), instances of *whom(so)ever* are also attested in argument relatives where the function of the relative pronoun within the relative clause would lead us to expect a nominative (79).

(78) Example of an argument relative introduced by *whomsoever*, where the case form of the *wh*-pronoun corresponds to both matrix and relative-internal case requirements

with Martin and Leora, or <u>with</u> [**whomsoever** he could persuade to come]
(Sinclair Lewis, *Martin Arrowsmith*, London 1926 [1925]: 400)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 58]

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[42] Note that *please* is synonymous with *want*, *like*, and *choose* in free relatives involving Null Complement Anaphora.

[43] As we will see in Section 3.7.2, the only possible instances of pied-piping in argument relatives occur when the relative clause itself appears as the complement of a preposition, and the preposition associated with the *wh*-phrase is able to 'merge' with the matrix preposition.

(79) Examples of argument relatives introduced by *whom(so)ever*, where the case form of the *wh*-pronoun corresponds only to matrix case requirements

a. power to summon [**whomsoever** might throw light upon the events] (newspaper article, 1919) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 57]

b. She sat by the fire conversing with [**whomsoever** approached her] (Henry James, *The American*, Tauchnitz ed. (1877): 1.267) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56]

c. winking over her shoulder at [**whomever** would watch her comedy][44] (Compton Mackenzie, *Sinister street*, London 1913-14: 894) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 57]

The occurrence of *whom(so)ever* in examples like the ones given in (80) would appear to suggest that the case of *wh*-pronouns in argument relatives is still determined by the function of the relative clause in the matrix sentence. However, *wh*-pronouns introducing argument relatives in object and prepositional complement position just as readily take the nominative form *whoever* in Modern English, especially when the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of the relative (80).

(80) Examples of argument relatives introduced by *whoever*, where the case form of the *wh*-pronoun corresponds to the function of the relativised constituent in the clause, but clashes with matrix case requirements

a. he was angry with [**whoever** crossed his path] (Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56)
b. Rhonda dances with [**whoever** asks her to dance] (Baker 1995: 210)

As we might expect, the nominative *whoever* is obligatory when both the relative clause and the *wh*-pronoun function as the subject of a finite clause (81). However, we also find instances of *whoever* which meet neither matrix nor relative-internal case requirements, especially in fronted object relatives (82).

(81) Example of an argument relative introduced by *whoever*, where the nominative corresponds to both matrix and relative-internal case requirements

[**Whoever** has an ambition to be heard in a crowd] must press, and squeeze, and thrust, and climb, with indefatigable pains ...
(Jonathan Swift, *A tale of a tub, The battle of the books and other satires*, London (Dent) 1909 [1704]: 43)

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[44] This is the only example of *whomever* cited in Jespersen (1949 [1927]).

(82) Examples of fronted argument relatives where both the relative clause and the *wh*-pronoun function as the object of a verb

a. Go some of you, [**who ere** you find] attach[45] (Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*: V. iii. 173) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 58]

b. And generally, [**who euer** the King fauours], The Cardinall instantly will finde imployment (Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*: II. i. 47) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 58]

In left-dislocated free relatives, the *whom(so)ever* is most likely to occur when the relativised constituent is the object of a preposition, and the preposition in question is pied-piped with the *wh*-phrase (83).

(83) Instance of *whomsoever* in a left-dislocated free relative, where the *wh*-pronoun is the object of a pied-piped preposition

Giue me also this power, that [on **whomsoeuer** I lay hands]$_i$, hee$_i$ may receiue the holy Ghost (*The authorized version of the Bible* 1611 (Facsimile ed., Oxford 1833): Acts 8.19) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 72]

Who(so)ever is favoured not only when the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of the left-dislocated relative (84), but also when it is the object of a verb or stranded preposition (85).

(84) Instances of *whosoever* in left-dislocated free relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of the relative clause

[**whosoeuer** shall smite thee on thy right cheeke]$_i$, turne to him$_i$ the other also ... And [**whosoeuer** shall compell thee to goe a mile]$_j$, go with him$_j$ twaine.
(*The authorized version of the Bible* 1611 (Facsimile ed., Oxford 1833): Matthew 5.39) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 71f]

(85) Instances of *whoever* in left-dislocated free relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb or stranded preposition

a. [**whoever** I give the bread that I wet in wine]$_i$, he$_i$ shall betray me (Allen's (1980: 209) Modern English translation of example (76))

b. this is my advice: [**whoever** you find them with]$_i$, he$_i$ should be killed (Allen's (1980: 209) Modern English translation of example (75))

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[45] i.e. 'seize whoever you find'

3.7.2 Case trends in free relatives introduced by simplex *wh*-pronouns

As mentioned earlier, *who* and *whom* occur quite readily in free relatives containing VP ellipsis or Null Complement Anaphora, but are disfavoured in non-ellipsis contexts. Virtually all of Jespersen's (1949 [1927]) examples of *who* and *whom* in free relatives without ellipsis come from poems, Shakespeare plays, and the 1611 version of the Bible. These examples suggest that the nominative form *who* is the only option in free relatives without ellipsis when both the relativised constituent and the relative clause itself function as the subject of a finite clause (86).

(86) Examples of argument relatives where both the *wh*-pronoun and the relative itself function as the subject of a finite clause (Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56)

a. [**Who** steales my purse], steales trash (Shakespeare, *Othello*: III. iii. 157)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56]

b. [**who** says man] says misery
(Hall Caine, *The eternal city*, London 1901: 297)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56]

Who seems equally obligatory when the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of a left-dislocated free relative (87).

(87) Examples of left-dislocated free relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of a finite clause

a. [**who** pretendeth to God]$_i$, God attendeth to him$_i$ (William Caxton)
[Householder 1986: 151][46]

b. [**who** tels me true]$_i$, though in his tale lye death, I heare him$_i$ as he flatter'd
(Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*: I. ii. 102)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 71]

The objective form *whom* occurs most readily when the relative clause appears as the complement of a matrix preposition and the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb (88) or preposition (89).

[46] Householder's source for this Caxton quote is Steinki (1932: 45-6).

(88) Examples of argument relatives that appear as the complement of a matrix preposition, where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb

a. Eternity so spent in worship paid To [**whom** we hate]
(John Milton, *Paradise lost*: 2.249) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 58]

b. the souls of [**whom** thou lovest] (Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Poetical works*, ed. Hutchinson, Oxford 1904: 260) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 58]

(89) Examples of argument relatives that appear as the complement of a matrix preposition, where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a preposition

a. beare ... all the rest To **whom** they are directed
(Shakespeare, *Henry IV - Part 1*: III. iv. 3) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 55f]

b. Therefore hath hee mercie on **whom** he will have mercy (*The authorised version of the Bible* 1611 (Facsimile ed., Oxford 1833): Romans 9.18) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56]

As can be seen from the examples in (89), the preposition associated with the *wh*-pronoun need not be stranded in argument relatives where both the *wh*-pronoun and the relative function as the object of a preposition, provided the two prepositions are identical. In Section 3.7.3, I will argue that the presence of just one preposition in the surface string suggests that free relatives of this type are prepositional rather than nominal.

In (88) and (89), the occurrence of the objective form *whom* fits in with both matrix and relative-internal case requirements. However, Jespersen (1949 [1927]: 57) also offers examples of *whom* in argument relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb, but the relative clause itself appears as the subject of a finite clause (90).

(90) Instances of *whom* in argument relatives that function as the subject of a finite clause

a. [**Whom** the gods love] die young
(George Gordon Byron, *Don Juan*: canto 4, stanza 12)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 57]

b. [**Whom** I marry] shall be noble
(Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, Tauchnitz (1856): 231)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 57]

The examples in (86)-(90) would seem to indicate that the distribution of *who* and *whom* in free relatives without ellipsis is determined primarily by relative-internal case requirements, regardless of whether the free relative is left-dislocated or functions as the argument of a matrix predicate (cf. also Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 57f).

3.7.3 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

Allen (1980: 116-120) argues that the case differences between argument and left-dislocated *wh*-relatives in Old English (OE) and Middle English (ME) fall out from differences in the syntactic status of the *wh*-pronoun:

(a) in OE and ME argument relatives, the *wh*-phrase is influenced only by matrix case requirements, because it is base-generated as a nominal projection outside the relative clause (Allen 1980: 117)[47]; this analysis also accounts for the absence of pied-piping in argument relatives

(b) in OE and ME left-dislocated free relatives, the case of the *wh*-phrase is determined solely by its function in the relative clause, because it is base-generated within the relative clause (Allen 1980: 120)

The case trends summarised in Sections 3.7.1-3.7.2 indicate that there is no longer such a clear distinction between argument relatives and left-dislocated free relatives in Modern English. While the *wh*-pronoun introducing an argument relative may surface in the case form corresponding only to the function of the relative in the matrix clause (79), we also find argument relatives where the *wh*-form corresponds to the function of the *wh*-pronoun in the relative, but violates matrix case requirements (90). This suggests that in Modern English, the *wh*-pronoun has a closer relationship with the relative clause in argument relatives than it did in Old English and Middle English.

Alexiadou et al. (2000: 22f) propose that free relatives are CP complements of a phonetically zero D (91).

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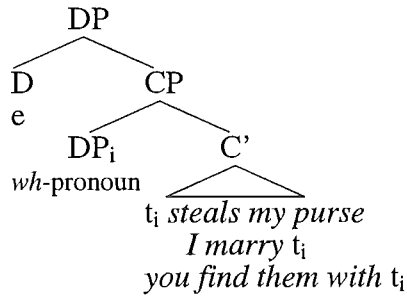
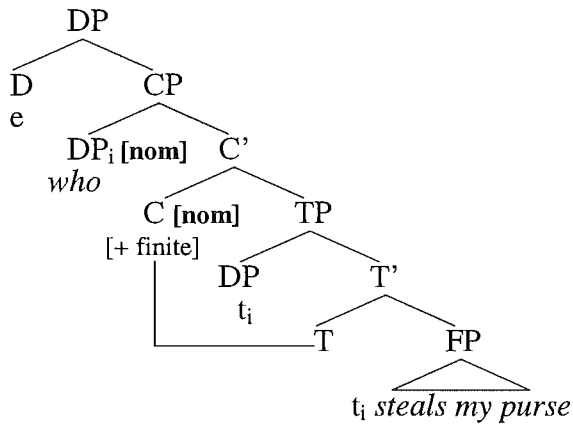
[47] See Bresnan & Grimshaw (1978) and Larson (1987) for similar proposals.

(91)



The *wh*-pronoun will occupy a Pos-Case position only when it functions as the subject of the clause (92).

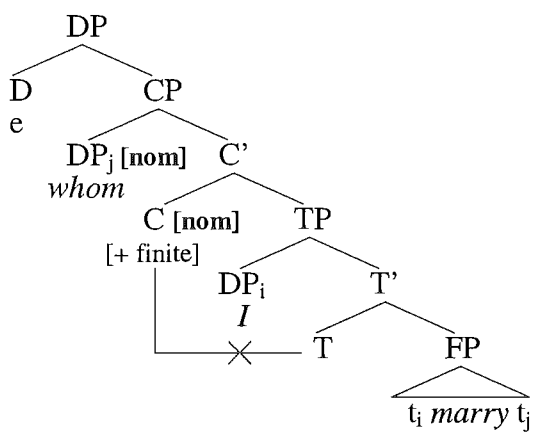
(92)



As can be seen from (92), finite C inherits the ability to check nominative Pos-Case on its specifier from T, because no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out.

When the *wh*-pronoun is the object of a verb or stranded preposition, C and T will be separated by the subject of the clause at Spell-Out (93). As a result, the *wh*-pronoun will not occupy a Pos-Case position, and will instead be influenced by the Def-Case constraint.

(93)



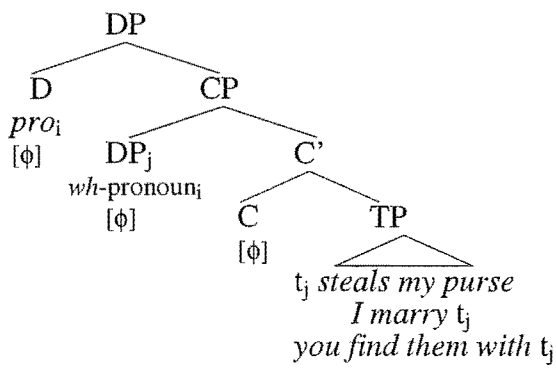
Any *wh*-pronoun that functions as the argument of a predicate in the relative clause will be influenced by Arg-Case requirements associated with this relative-internal predicate. Since the *wh*-pronoun does not have any direct relationship to a matrix predicate in Alexiadou et al.'s (2000) analysis, we would expect no Arg-Case influence from the matrix clause.[48]

The analysis proposed by Alexiadou et al. (2000: 22f) correctly predicts the distribution of simplex *wh*-pronouns in the examples cited in Section 3.7.2. However, Alexiadou et al.'s (2000) approach is unable to offer an explanation for the occurrence of the objective form *whomsoever* in subject relatives that appear as the object of a preposition (94), because the presence of the empty D in (92) prevents the *wh*-pronoun from entering into a syntactic or semantic relationship with the matrix clause.

(94) She sat by the fire conversing with [**whomsoever** approached her]
(Henry James, *The American*, Tauchnitz ed. (1877): 1.267)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56]

One way to establish a link between the matrix clause and the *wh*-pronoun would be to assume that the free relative DP is headed by a null pronominal element (*pro*), which is identified through ϕ-feature (and case) agreement with the *wh*-pronoun (95).[49]

(95)



The analysis in (95) would not only predict that a *wh*-pronoun introducing an argument relative in Modern English may be influenced by matrix as well as relative-internal case requirements, but could also explain why preposition stranding is obligatory in argument relatives unless the preposition is also needed in the matrix clause:

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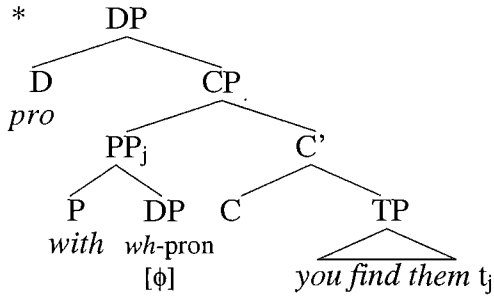
[48] I am assuming that the Arg-Case constraint always applies to the head of an argument DP.
[49] See McCreight (1988: 107f), Suñer (1984), and Grosu (1996: 289ff) for analyses along these lines.

Observations by Grosu (1996: 289ff) suggest that agreement between *pro* and the *wh*-pronoun is only possible if the *wh*-pronoun enters into spec-head agreement with C. This means that the *wh*-pronoun must head the *wh*-phrase in [Spec, CP] in order to be identified with *pro*. If the *wh*-pronoun is embedded inside a PP, it will not be in a spec-head relationship with C, and *pro* will remain unidentified, causing the derivation to crash (96).

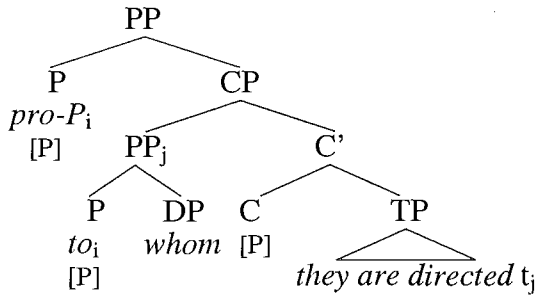
(96) *



In free relatives of the type illustrated in (97), pied-piping of the preposition is possible, because the CP is dominated by a PP headed by a *pro-P* rather than a DP headed by *pro* (98).[50]

(97) beare ... all the rest To **whom** they are directed
(Shakespeare, *Henry IV - Part 1*: III. iv. 3) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 55f]

(98)



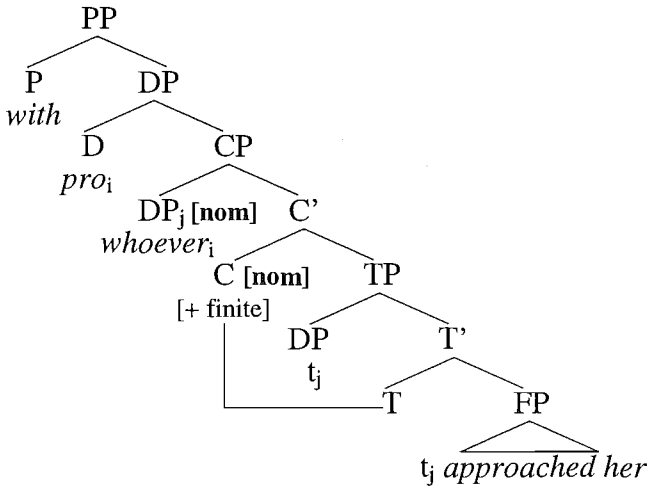
The *pro-P* in (98) is licensed through feature agreement with the preposition *to*. Such agreement between the *pro-P* and the overt preposition is possible because *to* heads the PP in [Spec, CP], and is thus able to transmit its P(reposition)-features to C through spec-head agreement.

The assumption that free relatives are headed by an empty pronominal element clearly allows us to capture a number of properties characteristic of Modern English argument relatives. However, even case agreement between *pro*

[50] See Grosu (1996: 259, 289) for a similar proposal.

and the *wh*-pronoun would not be sufficient to predict the occurrence of *whomsoever* in sentences like (94). As discussed in Section 2.2.3, prepositions are unable to check Pos-Case. Any *pro* heading a free relative in prepositional complement position would thus receive objective Arg-Case and Def-Case, but no Pos-Case. The *wh*-pronoun, on the other hand, will check nominative Pos-Case, because it appears as the specifier of a finite C, and no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out (99).

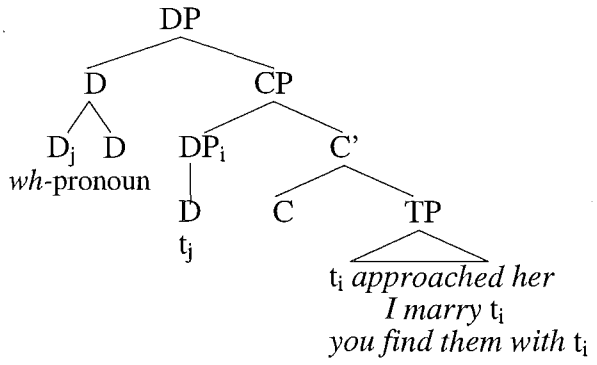
(99)



Since Pos-Case generally overrides Arg-Case and Def-Case in Present-Day English (cf. Section 2.3.4), the *wh*-pronoun would be expected to surface in the nominative form *whoever* rather than the objective *whom(so)ever.*

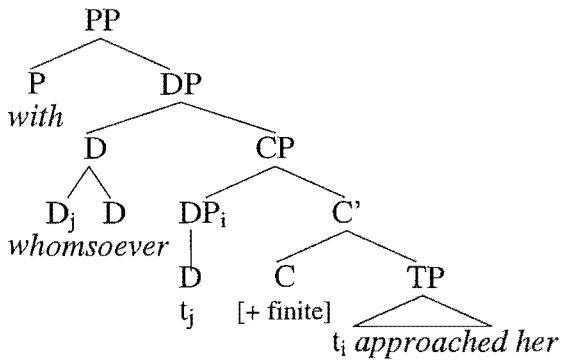
As (99) illustrates, [Spec, CP] is a nominative Pos-Case position in free relatives with a *wh*-subject. If we want to prevent the *wh*-pronoun in sentences like (94) from checking nominative Pos-Case, we will have to assume that it occupies a position other than [Spec, CP] at Spell-Out. Kayne (1994: 125, 154 n.13) argues that the head of the *wh*-phrase in a free relative undergoes head-movement to the CP-external D which heads the relative construction (100).

(100)



In this analysis, the *wh*-pronoun introducing a free relative will check Pos-Case only if the free relative itself occupies a Pos-Case position. When the free relative appears as the complement of a preposition (101), the *wh*-pronoun will be subject only to Arg-Case and Def-Case requirements, because prepositions are unable to check Pos-Case.

(101)



As mentioned in footnote 48, I am assuming that the Arg-Case constraint always applies to the head of an argument DP. In (97), the *wh*-pronoun heads the DP that dominates the relative clause, and the trace of the *wh*-pronoun heads the CP-internal DP. The form of the *wh*-pronoun will therefore be influenced by matrix as well as relative-internal Arg-Case requirements:[51]

If the matrix Arg-Case wins out, the *wh*-pronoun will surface in the objective form *whom(so)ever*, because the free relative is the lowest argument of the preposition *with*. The selection of *whom(so)ever* is further supported by the Def-Case constraint.

If the relative-internal Arg-Case wins out, the *wh*-pronoun will surface in the nominative form *whoever*, because the *wh*-phrase is the highest argument of the verb *approach*. The choice of the nominative form is further supported by the trend towards invariant *who* in all *wh*-contexts.

Free relatives of the type illustrated in (102) can again be analysed as CPs dominated by a PP rather than DP (103).

(102) beare ... all the rest To **whom** they are directed
(Shakespeare, *Henry IV - Part 1*: III. iv. 3) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 55f]

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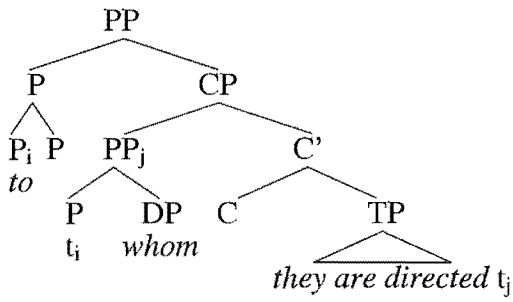
[51] See Vogel (2001) for suggestions on how the interaction between matrix and relative-internal case influences could be modelled in an optimality theoretic approach. A detailed discussion of the competition between matrix and relative-internal case in free relatives in a number of different languages can be found in McCreight (1988: 85-109).

(103)



As can be seen from (103), in such relatives, it is the preposition rather than the *wh*-pronoun which raises to the head of the phrase dominating the CP.

The word order found in V-particle constructions suggests that free relatives tend not to raise to [Spec, *v*P] when they are objects of a verb (104).[52]

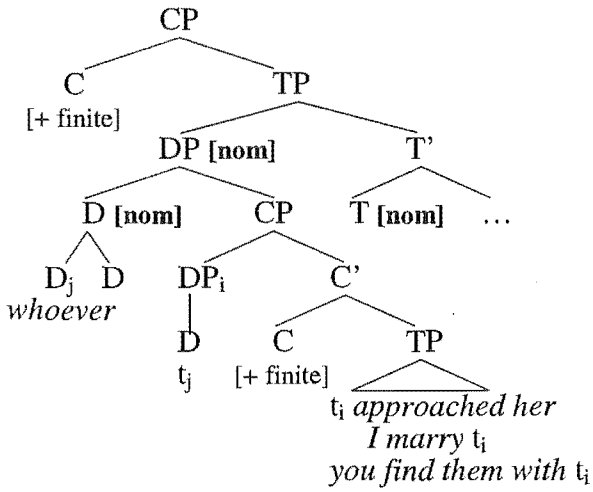
(104) a. ??We'll throw [whoever bothers the barman] out.
b. We'll throw out [whoever bothers the barman].

A *wh*-pronoun introducing a free relative that functions as the object of a matrix verb is thus unlikely to be influenced by matrix Pos-Case.

When a free relative appears in [Spec, TP] of the matrix clause, on the other hand, a *wh*-pronoun heading the relative clause will be able to check nominative Pos-Case with the matrix T, provided the matrix clause is finite (105).

[52] See Section 2.2.2.1 for a more detailed discussion of V-particle constructions and object positions.

(105)



Since Pos-Case generally overrides Arg-Case in Present-Day English, the analysis in (105) would lead us to predict that only nominative *wh*-forms should be able to occur in free relatives that appear as the subject of a finite clause. The occurrence of *whom* in examples like (106) is thus unexpected.

(106) [**Whom** I marry] shall be noble
(Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, Tauchnitz (1856): 231)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 57]

One way to account for the coexistence of (106) and (107) would be to assume that only complex *wh*-forms are able to undergo head-movement to D.

(107) She sat by the fire conversing with [**whomsoever** approached her]
(Henry James, *The American*, Tauchnitz ed. (1877): 1.267)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56]

If the simplex *wh*-pronoun occupies [Spec, CP] at Spell-Out in sentences like (106), it will not be affected by matrix Pos-Case requirements, and will be predicted to surface in the objective form that corresponds to its relative-internal argument status. Such an approach would predict that the form of simplex *wh*-pronouns will be determined primarily by their function within the relative clause, while the form of complex *wh*-pronouns will be influenced by both matrix and relative-internal case requirements.

Alternatively, we could argue that any *wh*-pronoun introducing a free relative may be analysed as occupying either D or [Spec, CP] in Present-Day English. This approach would lead us to expect that both simplex and complex *wh*-pronouns may be influenced by matrix as well as relative-internal case requirements.

Whatever structural analysis we adopt, a purely case-based account will always remain unable to account for the occurrence of *whoever* in positions where both matrix and relative-internal case requirements would lead us to expect an objective pronoun form (108).

(108) And generally, [**who euer** the King fauours], The Cardinall instantly will finde imployment (Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*: II. i. 47)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 58]

The distribution of *wh*-forms in free relatives thus provides further evidence for competition between the three case constraints and the trend towards invariant *who(ever)* in all *wh*-contexts.

As mentioned in 3.7.1, the tendency towards invariant *whoever* appears to be particularly pronounced in left-dislocated free relatives (109).[53]

(109) this is my advice: [**whoever** you find them with]$_i$, he$_i$ should be killed (Allen's (1980: 209) Modern English translation of example (74))

If we assume that left-dislocated relatives have the same structure as argument relatives, this greater susceptibility to non-case influences will fall out naturally. Since left-dislocated relatives do not function as arguments of a matrix predicate, the *wh*-pronoun will be influenced by relative-internal Arg-Case and either relative-internal or matrix Def-Case requirements,[54] but not by matrix Pos-Case or Arg-Case.[55]

3.7.4 Case trends in free relatives with VP ellipsis and Null Complement Anaphora

VP ellipsis (VPE) and Null Complement Anaphora (NCA) are only possible in argument relatives. The missing predicate generally corresponds to the matrix predicate, and the function of the *wh*-phrase within the relative corresponds to the function of the relative in the matrix clause. For example, both the relative clause

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[53] Although the left-dislocated relative is coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause in (109), the occurrence of *whoever* would appear to be just as likely in left-dislocated relatives coreferent with the object of the matrix clause (i).

(i) [**Whoever** you found them with]$_i$, you should kill him$_i$. (example provided by Liz Pearce)

[54] If we assume that the *wh*-pronoun occupies [Spec, CP] at Spell-Out, it will be subject to relative-internal Def-Case requirements. If the *wh*-pronoun is treated as the head of the relative construction, it will be influenced by matrix Def-Case.

[55] For a more detailed discussion of left-dislocation see Section 4.2.

and the *wh*-pronoun function as the object of the verb *please* in (110a), and both the relative clause and the *wh*-pronoun function as the object of the verb *marry* in (111a).

(110) Examples of argument relatives with VP ellipsis (VPE) where the function of the *wh*-pronoun within the relative corresponds to the function of the relative in the matrix clause

a. She had the art of pleasing [**whom** she would] (Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, London 1867 [1852]: 122) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

b. waiting till I could fling my shoes <u>at</u> **whom** I would (Hope, *King's M.*: 13) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

(111) Examples of argument relatives with Null Complement Anaphora (NCA) where the function of the *wh*-pronoun within the relative corresponds to the function of the relative in the matrix clause

a. Constance may marry [**whom** she pleases] (Oliver Goldsmith, Globe ed., London 1889: 676) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

b. I'll go <u>with</u> **whom** I choose (John Galsworthy, *A family man and other plays*, Tauchnitz: 292) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

When the *wh*-pronoun and the relative function as the object of a preposition in a VPE (110b) or NCA construction (111b), only one instance of the preposition appears in the surface string, always in a position immediately preceding the *wh*-pronoun.

While Null Complement Anaphora is confined to relatives that function as the object of a verb or preposition (111), VP ellipsis is also possible in subject relatives, provided that the relative clause follows a matrix verb. The matrix verb in question may be identical to the missing verb in the relative (112), but it need not be (113).

(112) Example of a subject relative with VP ellipsis, where the missing verb in the relative corresponds to the verb preceding the relative[56]

I will say my say to the end, mock at it [**who** may]
(John Ruskin, *Time and tide*, London 1904 [1867]: 94)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

(113) Examples of subject relatives with VP ellipsis, where the verb preceding the relative does not correspond to the missing VP

a. Be good, sweet maid, and let [**who** can] be clever (Charles Kingsley, 'A farewell. To C.E.G.', 1856) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56]

b. Let [**who** will] be against you
(Samuel Butler, *The way of all flesh*, London 1908 (1903): 107)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

In (113) the missing constituent in the relative corresponds to the following predicate (*be clever*, *be against you*) rather than the preceding verb *let*.

VPE relatives following *let* have exceptional case properties. In all of the VPE and NCA examples presented in (110)-(112), the case form of the *wh*-pronoun meets both matrix and relative-internal case requirements, and corresponds to the case found on lone personal pronouns in the same contexts. In examples like (113), on the other hand, the obligatory use of the nominative *who* violates matrix Pos-Case requirements. Since the *wh*-pronoun precedes a finite auxiliary within the relative clause, it will check nominative Pos-Case within the relative clause. However, the position of the relative in the matrix clause would lead us to expect an objective pronoun form. As can be seen from (114), a lone pronoun occupying the same position as the relatives in (113), will alway appears surface in the objective form rather than the nominative.[57]

---

[56] Note that the relative clause serves as the subject of the verb *mock* in this example. As Liz Pearce (p.c.) points out, the surface order is most likely to have resulted from the raising of the VP *mock at it* past the free relative (cf. Section 3.7.5 for further discussion).

[57] As we will see in Chapter 4, nominatives do occur when a pronoun following *let* appears in a coordinate (i).

(i) let [**he** and **I**] say good night together
(Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*, London 1900 (Macmillan) [1839]: 366)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 237]

This suggests that coordinates and free relatives share certain syntactic properties which affect the case status of pronouns contained in them.

(114) a. Let **them** be clever.
b. * Let **they** be clever.

While the case form of the *wh*-pronoun in (113) is predictable from the position and function of the *wh*-pronoun within the relative clause, Jespersen (1949 [1927]: 63) also provides examples of VPE and NCA relatives where the *wh*-form meets neither matrix nor relative-internal case requirements (115)-(116).

(115) Example illustrating the occurrence of *who* in argument relatives with VP ellipsis, where both matrix and relative-internal case requirements would lead us to expect an objective form

Let the patent be bought by **who** it will
(Daniel Defoe, *The complete gentleman*, ed. Bülbring, London 1890: 45)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

(116) Example illustrating the occurrence of *who* in argument relatives with Null Complement Anaphora, where both matrix and relative-internal case requirements would lead us to expect an objective form

I marry [**who** I please]
(Compton Mackenzie, *Carnival*, London 1922 [1912]: 355)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

3.7.5 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case and Def-Case

Chao (1987: 104ff) and Lobeck (1995: 32-35, 141-150) argue that the missing constituent in VP ellipsis constructions is base-generated as an empty category, which is interpreted through reconstruction at a semantic level of representation (117). Chao (1987: 104ff) proposes a similar analysis for Null Complement Anaphora (118).[58]

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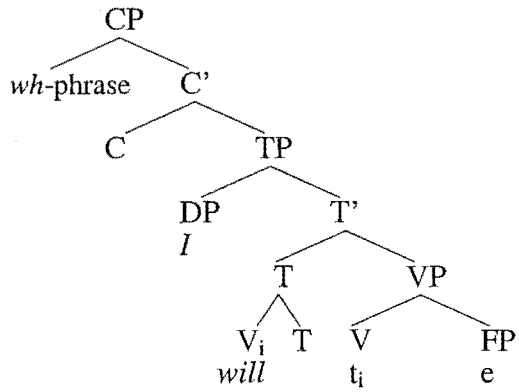
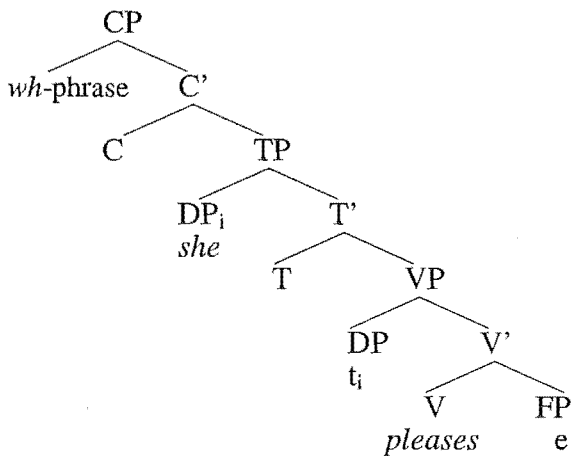
[58] Not everybody agrees that ellipsis involves the base-generation of empty categories followed by LF reconstruction. Merchant (2001: 70-73, 230f) equates ellipsis with PF deletion, and argues that the internal syntactic structure of the missing constituents is present throughout the derivation, even though it remains unpronounced.
As discussed in Section 3.6.2, the differences between an empty category approach and a PF deletion analysis have little bearing on the predictions of the three case constraints proposed in Chapter 2. In order to reduce the complexity of the tree diagrams, I have therefore decided to focus on the empty category approach in my discussion of VP ellipsis and Null Complement Anaphora.

(117) Tree diagram illustrating the base structure of the clause in free relatives involving VP ellipsis (VPE relatives), where the relativised constituent is the object of a verb or preposition[59]



(118) Tree diagram illustrating the base structure of the clause in free relatives involving Null Complement Anaphora (NCA relatives)[60]



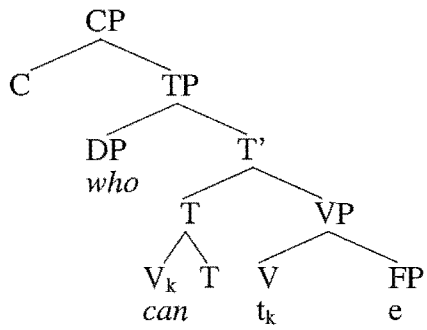
[59] Since the missing verb phrase in VP ellipsis constructions may be agentive/causative, I am assuming that the category of the base-generated empty constituent is FP rather than VP, where F is the functional category an agentive/causative transitive verb moves to before Spell-Out (cf. Section 2.2.2.1).

[60] I am assuming that Null Complement Anaphora verbs subcategorise for a *to*-infinitive lacking a TP-layer. See Wurmbrand (2001) for arguments in favour of assuming that infinitives of the kind ellipted here are not TPs.
I have decided to label the ellipted *to*-infinitive as a functional projection (FP), but the case predictions would be the same if *to* was assigned the category V, as suggested by Law (2000: 175-177). For a more detailed discussion of *to*-infinitives see Section 4.7.2.

Since the FP in (117) and (118) is base-generated as an empty category, the *wh*-phrase has to be inserted directly into (the higher) [Spec, CP] if it functions as the object of a verb or preposition.

When the *wh*-phrase functions as the subject of a VPE relative, it will be base-generated in [Spec, TP] (119).

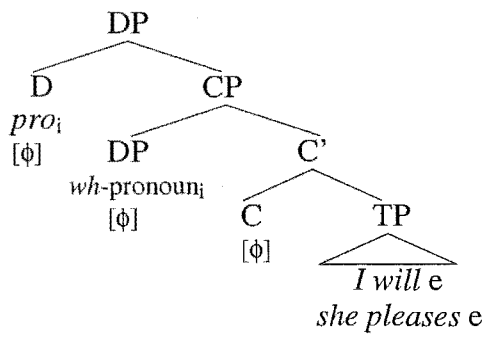
(119) Tree diagram illustrating the base structure of the clause in free relatives involving VPE relatives where the *wh*-phrase functions as the subject



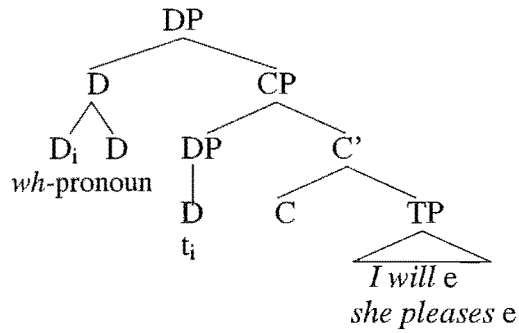
The exact case status of the *wh*-pronoun and its position at Spell-Out depend on the function of the *wh*-pronoun in the relative clause, and on our basic analysis of free relatives (cf. Section 3.7.3):

When the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject or as the object of a verb, the relative clause will be dominated by a DP. Depending on our analysis of free relatives, this DP will either be headed by *pro*, which needs to be identified through ϕ-feature agreement with the *wh*-pronoun (120), or by the *wh*-pronoun itself (121).

(120) Tree diagram illustrating the surface structure of VPE and NCA relatives dominated by a DP, if we assume that free relatives are headed by a *pro* that is identified with the *wh*-pronoun through ϕ-feature agreement (= *pro*-head approach)



(121) Tree diagram illustrating the surface structure of VPE and NCA relatives dominated by a DP, if we assume that free relatives are headed by the *wh*-pronoun (= *wh*-head approach)



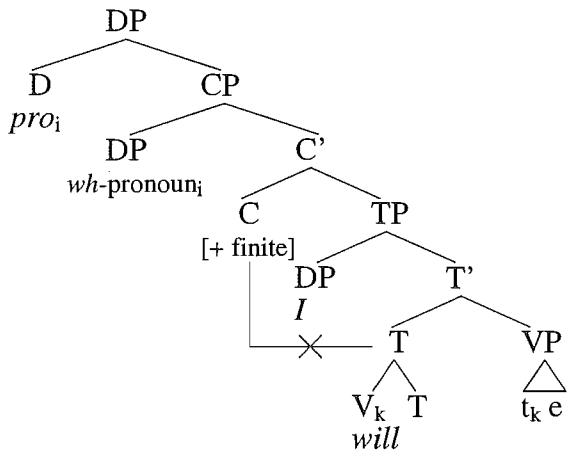
As discussed in Section 3.6.2., the occurrence of *wh*-phrases in ellipsis constructions is possible because the missing predicate and the *wh*-chain are present at Semantic Form (cf. Chao 1987: 148-155; Lobeck 1995: 32-35). *Wh*-pronouns in VPE and NCA relatives will therefore always be subject to Arg-Case requirements related to the missing predicate.

Both the *pro*-head approach (120) and the *wh*-head approach (121) predict that the form of the *wh*-pronoun in subject and object relatives involving ellipsis should also be influenced by matrix Arg-Case, because the free relative is headed either by the *wh*-pronoun itself (121), or by a *pro* that is identified with the *wh*-pronoun (120). Since the argument status of the free relative in the matrix clause is identical to the argument status of the *wh*-pronoun in VPE and NCA relatives, matrix and relative-internal Arg-Case will always reinforce each other:
When the *wh*-pronoun and the free relative function as the highest argument (= subject) of a predicate, the *wh*-pronoun will be linked to nominative Arg-Case.
When the *wh*-pronoun and the free relative function as the object of a verb, the *wh*-pronoun will be linked to objective Arg-Case.

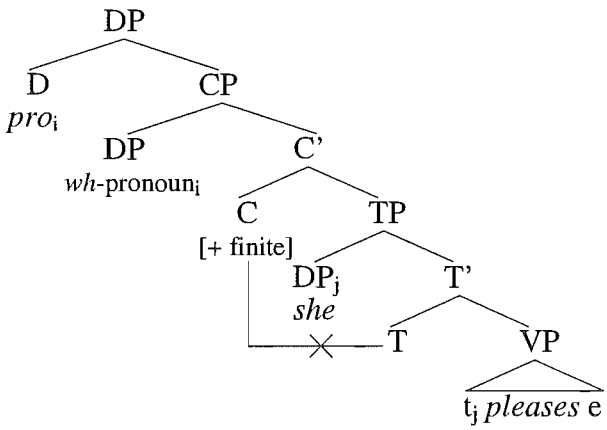
For NCA relatives and VPE relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb, both (120) and (121) predict that the *wh*-pronoun will be unable to check relative-internal Pos-Case:

In a *pro*-head analysis, the *wh*-pronoun appears in [Spec, CP] at Spell-Out, but C is unable to check nominative Pos-Case, because the subject intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out (122)-(123).

(122) Tree diagram illustrating the lack of surface adjacency between C and T in a *pro*-head analysis of VPE relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb



(123) Tree diagram illustrating the lack of surface adjacency between C and T in a *pro*-head analysis of NCA relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb



Since the *wh*-pronoun appears in a CP-internal position not covered by Pos-Case at Spell-Out, it will be influenced by relative-internal Def-Case requirements.

In a *wh*-head analysis, the *wh*-pronoun heads the DP dominating the relative CP (121). As the head of the DP, the *wh*-pronoun is immune to relative-internal Pos-Case and Def-Case influences, but it could be influenced by matrix Pos-Case and Def-Case requirements.

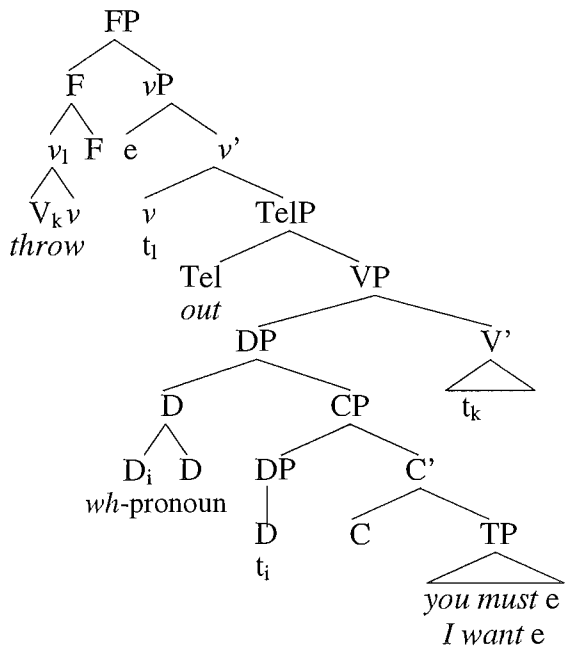
The word order in V-particle constructions suggests that object relatives involving VPE or NCA will generally remain in VP-internal position (124)-(125).[61]

(124) a. * Throw [who you must] out.
b. Throw out [who you must].

(125) a. * I'll throw [who I want] out.
b. I'll throw out [who I want].

Assuming that VPE and NCA object relatives are unable to raise to [Spec, *v*P], the *wh*-pronoun heading the relative will be influenced by matrix Def-Case, but not Pos-Case (126).

(126) Tree diagram illustrating the absence of Pos-Case influences on a *wh*-pronoun heading a VPE or NCA object relative



In VPE relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject,[62] the *pro*-head approach will predict that the *wh*-pronoun checks nominative Pos-Case inside the relative clause, because the *wh*-pronoun occupies [Spec, CP], and finite C is adjacent to T at Spell-Out (127).

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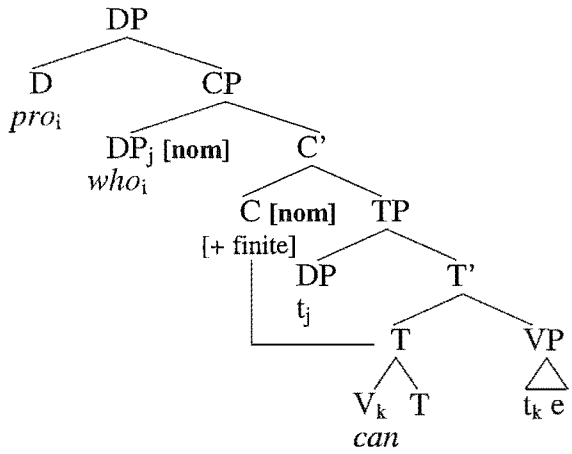
[61] See Section 2.2.2.1 for a more detailed discussion of V-particle constructions and object positions.

[62] Note that Null Complement Anaphora only seems possible in relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb or preposition.

(127) Tree diagram illustrating how C and T combine to check nominative Pos-Case on the *wh*-pronoun in a *pro*-head analysis of VPE relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject



Since the *wh*-pronoun occupies a CP-internal position at Spell-Out, it will not be influenced by matrix Pos-Case or Def-Case.

In a *wh*-head analysis, on the other hand, the *wh*-pronoun heads the DP dominating the relative CP, and would therefore be predicted to be constrained by matrix Pos-Case or Def-Case, but not by relative-internal Pos-Case and Def-Case requirements.

As discussed in Section 3.7.4, VP ellipsis is only possible in subject relatives if the relative follows a verb or verbal projection.

When a VPE relative functions as the subject of a finite clause, it will appear after the verb and any complements at Spell-Out (128).

(128) I will say my say to the end, mock at it [**who** may]
(John Ruskin, *Time and tide*, London 1904 [1867]: 94)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

This surface order is most likely to result from raising the verbal projection *mock at it* past the free relative. If we assume that the relative has raised to [Spec, TP] (and the VP occupies a specifier position within the C-system), the *wh*-pronoun will be able to check Pos-Case with the matrix T, and is therefore predicted to surface in the nominative form *who*. If the relative is assumed to remain in [Spec, *v*P], the *wh*-pronoun will be influenced by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for the objective form *whom*. However, the *wh*-pronoun will also be subject to relative-internal and matrix Arg-Case requirements, both of which call for the nominative

who in this context, because the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of the relative clause, and the free relative itself functions as the subject of the matrix clause. Since matrix Def-Case is unlikely to override the combined demands of matrix and relative-internal Arg-Case, the *wh*-pronoun would again be predicted to surface as *who*.

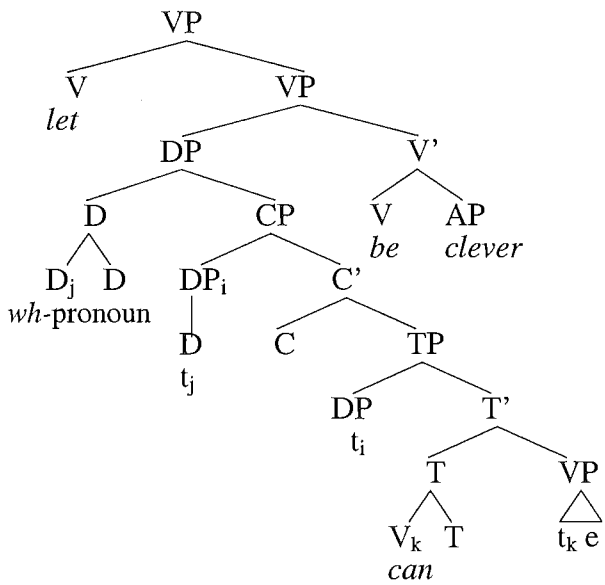
As (129) illustrates, VPE relatives may also appear as the subject of a small clause following the verb *let*.[63]

(129) Be good, sweet maid, and let [**who** can] be clever (Charles Kingsley, 'A farewell. To C.E.G.', 1856) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 56]

The only potential matrix Pos-Case position available in such sentences would be a [Spec, *v*P] position associated with *let*. However, if free relatives do not raise to [Spec, *v*P] when they function as the object of a verb (cf. (124)-(126)), it would seem unlikely that VPE relatives that function as the subject of a small clause would be able to raise to the [Spec, *v*P] position in the matrix clause. The clear preference for *who* in sentences like (129) certainly suggests that the *wh*-pronoun is unable to check objective Pos-Case in VPE relatives functioning as the subject of a small clause (130).

[63] As noted earlier, the function of the *wh*-phrase in a VPE and NCA relatives always corresponds to the function of the relative in the matrix clause. In (129), the *wh*-phrase functions as the subject of the VPE relative, which suggest that the free relative itself functions as the subject of a small clause following *let*.

(130) Tree diagram illustrating the absence of Pos-Case influences on a *wh*-pronouns heading VPE relative that functions as the subject of a small clause following *let*[64]



Since VPE subject relatives do not appear in Pos-Case positions at Spell-Out, the *wh*-head approach will predict that the form of the *wh*-pronoun should be influenced by matrix Def-Case, which calls for the objective form *whom*, as well as matrix and relative-internal Arg-Case, which call for the nominative *who*. Given that matrix Def-Case is unlikely to override the combination of matrix and relative-internal Arg-Case, we would expect *who* to be strongly favoured, which does indeed seem to be the case.

When the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a preposition in a VPE or NCA relative, the preposition is always pied-piped (131).[65]

(131) a. M Paul, then, might dance with **whom** he would (Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, London 1867 (1852): 135) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

b. I'll dance with **whom** I please.

This obligatory pied-piping, and the absence of an additional matrix preposition, suggests that the relative clause is dominated by a PP rather than DP when the relative pronoun follows a preposition (cf. Section 3.7.3).

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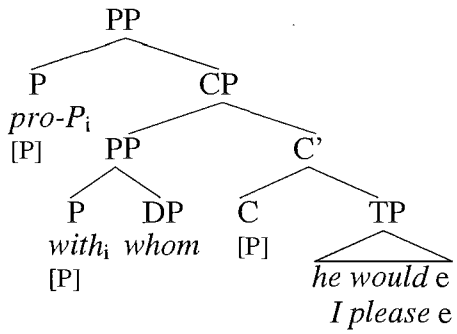
[64] For a more detailed discussion of small clauses see Chapter 4.

[65] See (110b), (111b), and (115) for further examples.

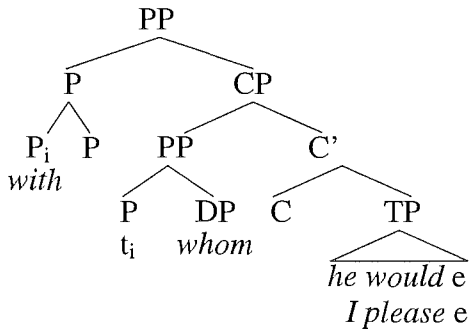
If we assume that free relatives are always headed by an empty pronominal constituent, VPE and NCA relatives involving a preposition will be headed by a *pro-P* (132).

(132) Tree diagram illustrating the surface structure of prepositional VPE and NCA relatives if we assume that free relatives headed by an empty pro-form that is identified through feature agreement with the head of the phrase in [Spec, CP]



If we assume that the head of the phrase in [Spec, CP] undergoes head-movement to head the free relative construction at Spell-Out, prepositional VPE and NCA relatives will be headed by the preposition itself (133).

(133) Tree diagram illustrating the surface structure of prepositional VPE and NCA relatives if we assume that the head of the phrase in [Spec, CP] undergoes head-movement to head the free relative at Spell-Out



Both analyses predict that the *wh*-pronoun will be influenced by relative-internal Arg-Case requirements associated with the preposition, and also by relative-internal Def-Case, because objects of prepositions are unable to check Pos-Case within the prepositional phrase. The *wh*-pronoun will not be influenced by any matrix case requirements, because it appears in a CP-internal position that has no link to the matrix clause.

Since both the Arg-Case and the Def-Case constraint require objects of prepositions to surface in their objective form, the occurrence of the nominative *who* in examples like (134) suggests that the distribution of *wh*-forms in VPE and NCA relatives is also influenced by the trend towards invariant *who*.

(134) Let the patent be bought by **who** it will
(Daniel Defoe, *The complete gentleman*, ed. Bülbring, London 1890: 45)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

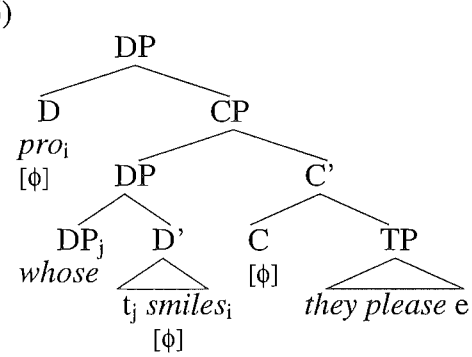
The distribution of *wh*-forms in the VPE and NCA relatives discussed so far can be captured equally well in a *wh*-head approach as in a *pro*-head approach. However, Jespersen's (1949 [1927]: 63) discussion of free relatives involving ellipsis also includes examples like (135), whose occurrence is predictable in a *pro*-head approach (136), but impossible if we assume that all free relatives must be headed by an overt element (i.e. either a *wh*-pronoun or a preposition).

(135) Examples of NCA relatives that are predictable in a *pro*-head approach, but not in a *wh*-head analysis

a. I shall accept [**whose** company I choose] (Thomas Hardy, *The return of the native*, Wessex ed., London 1912 [1878]: 313)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

b. they are all at liberty to be the recipients of [**whose** smiles they please]
(Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, London (Nelson) [1847]: 222)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63]

(136)



As discussed in Section 2.2.2.3 and Section 3.1, genitive DPs are assumed to be base-generated in [Spec, NumP], and check genitive Pos-Case in [Spec, DP]. A genitive DP will thus always occupy a specifier position within the noun phrase. Since the noun phrase containing the genitive DP also occupies a specifier position in (136), a *wh*-head analysis of (135b) would have to involve illicit head-movement

out of the specifier of a specifier. The possible occurrence of NCA relatives of the type illustrated in (135) could be thus be seen as evidence that free relatives do not necessarily have to have an overt head.[66]

3.8 *wh*-pronouns in headed relatives

The use of *wh*-pronouns in headed relatives is a comparatively recent development. In Old English, headed relatives were introduced by the complementizer *ðe* and/or a form of the demonstrative *se* (Allen 1980: 75-91).[67] When the relative was introduced by *se* alone, the demonstrative generally surfaced in the case corresponding to its function in the relative clause (Allen 1980: 84).[68]

(137) Ða man ofsloh ðes Caseres gerefan
then one killed the emperor's reeve.SG.MASC.ACC

[**se** was Labenius gehaten]
DEM.SG.MASC.NOM was Labenius called

'Then they killed the king's reeve, who was called Labenius.'
(*Peterborough Chronicle* Prologue) [Allen 1980: 83]

In relatives introduced by *se ðe*, on the other hand, the demonstrative could surface either in the case associated with its function in the relative clause (138), or with the case assigned to the head noun in the matrix clause (Allen 1980: 86ff). According to Allen (1980: 87f), the demonstrative introducing the relative clause tended to attract the case of the head noun only if the head noun bore dative or accusative case (139)-(140).[69]

(138) Swa swa Aaron wæs, se arwurda bisceop,
as Aaron was, the.SG.MASC.NOM worthy bishop

[**ðone** ðe God sylf geceas]
DEM.SG.MASC.ACC that God self chose

'As Aaron was, the worthy bishop, whom God himself chose'
(*Ælfric Lives* XXIX.190) [Allen 1980: 87]

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[66] It is however important to bear in mind that such NCA relatives are rare, and may be influenced by Latin constructions (cf. Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 63).

[67] Note that *se* served both as a demonstrative and as a definite determiner in Old English. The full paradigm for *se* is given in Section 1.1.

[68] Key to abbreviations used in the glosses: ACC = accusative, DEM = demonstrative, MASC = masculine, NOM = nominative, SG = singular.

[69] Key to abbreviations used in the glosses: 1sg = first person singular pronoun, 2pl = second person plural pronoun, ACC = accusative, DAT = dative, DEM = demonstrative, MASC = masculine, PL = plural, SG = singular

(139) Ne he bið Iudeum anum seald, ac he bid eallum ðeodum,
not he is Jews.DAT alone.DAT given, but he is all.DAT people.DAT

[**ðam** ðe on God gelyfan willað]
DEM.PL.DAT that in God believe will

'He is not given to the Jews alone, but to all people who will believe in God' (*Vercelli* V.182) [Allen 1980: 87]

(140) ic wat wytodlice ðæt ge secað ðone hælend
1sg.NOM know truly that 2pl.NOM seek the.SG.MASC.ACC saviour

[**ðone** ðe on rode ahangen wæs]
DEM.SG.MASC.ACC that on cross hung was

'I know truly that you seek the Saviour, who was hung on the cross.' (*St. Matthew* 1766 (XXVIII.5)) [Allen 1980: 87]

By the Early Middle English period, the demonstrative pronoun had disappeared from the construction, and the complementizers *ðe* and *ðæt* had become the favoured relative markers in headed relatives (Allen 1980: 202-206).

Research by Allen (1980: 197ff) suggests that *wh*-pronouns started to appear in headed relatives during the Middle English period, and were at first used mainly after prepositions (141), and in genitive contexts (142).

(141) And alle ðeos weren min eldre [of **wan** we beoð
and all these were my ancestors of wh.OBJ 1pl.NOM are

ispronge]
descended

'And all these were my ancestors, of whom we are descended' (*Layamon (Caligula)* 25081) [Allen 1980: 200]

(142) Eadi is his spuse, [**hwas** meiðhad is unwemmet]
blessed is his spouse wh.GEN maidenhood is untouched
'Blessed is his spouse, whose maidenhood is untouched'
(*Hali Meidenhad* 578) [Allen 1980: 200]

While the use of *wh*-pronouns in headed non-subject relatives had become quite common by the middle of the 13th century, headed subject relatives introduced by a *wh*-pronoun remained extremely rare up to the Early Modern English period (Allen 1980: 200, 202; Householder 1986: 151).

In Middle English, the case of the *wh*-pronoun in a headed relative was generally determined by its function within the relative clause. Since the use of *wh*-pronouns in headed relatives was largely confined to objective and genitive contexts, the objective *hwæm* 'whom' and the genitive *hwæs* 'whose' predominate in headed *wh*-relatives in Middle English (Allen 1980: 199; Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 80; Mustanoja 1960: 200f; Householder 1986: 151; Gelderen 1997: 73, 78).

According to Householder (1986: 151, 159, 162), the nominative *wh*-form *who* first appeared in nonrestrictive subject relatives such as (143), but subsequently also spread to restrictive subject relatives (144).

(143) by the grace of God, [**who** have you ever in his keeping]
(*Paston letters*: common closing formula) [Mustanoja 1960: 200][70]

(144) Above all, they constantly attended those committees of senators [**who** are silent in the house and loud in the coffee-house]
(Jonathan Swift, *A tale of a tub, The battle of the books and other satires*, London (Dent) 1909 [1704]: 54)

While Shakespeare still exhibits a clear preference for *that* in restrictive subject relatives, Ball (1996: 248-250) reports a sharp increase in the use of *who* in this context from the 18th century onwards. Virtually all of the British and American authors in Householder's (1986: 159) corpus of 20th century mystery writers favour *who* over *that* in restrictive subject relatives, and Householder (1986: 159) notes a similar preference for *who* in the Brown University Corpus of 20th century American English texts, and in a corpus of spoken British English compiled by Randolph Quirk in the 1960s. In the Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English *who* occurs in 97.7% of 1316 unembedded restrictive subject relatives with a human antecedent, but *that* is slightly favoured over *which* when the antecedent is inanimate (Sigley 1997: 273).

3.8.1 The extension of *who* to objective contexts

Given the comparatively late emergence of headed subject relatives introduced by *who*, it is not surprising that authors who favour *who* in

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[70] Interestingly, in some of the 15th century Paston letters, *whom* appears in the place of *who* (i).

(i) by the grace of God, [**Whom** have yow in Hys kepyng]
(*Paston letters* III 238 [1478]) [Mustanoja 1960: 200 n.1]

While the choice of *whom* in (i) could be due to its status as an invariant *wh*-form for headed relatives (cf. Gelderen 1997: 78), it is also possible that the use of the objective form is due to case agreement with the head noun *God*, which functions as the object of the preposition *of*.

interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or preposition, still retain the objective form *whom* in corresponding headed relatives (cf. Section 3.1).

In Present-Day English, overt *wh*-pronouns occur primarily in nonrestrictive relatives (143), (145)-(147).[71]

(145) Examples of nonrestrictive relatives where the relativised constituent is the object of a verb

a. To Canada, [**whom** we love and prize] (Alfred Tennyson, *Poetical works*, London 1894: 575) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 121]

b. the boy, [**who** they called Xury] (Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 1719 (Facsimile ed., London 1883): 25) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 243]

(146) Example of a nonrestrictive relative where the relativised constituent is the object of a stranded preposition[72]

Even John Arnold, [**whom** I confided in] ... has proved an execrable villain (Richardson, *Pamela*, (Tauchnitz): 1.144) [Visser 1963: 402]

(147) Example of a nonrestrictive relative where the relativised constituent is the object of a pied-piped preposition

But thou, [to **whom** my jewels trifles are] (Shakespeare, *Sonnets*: 48.5) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 192]

In corresponding restrictive relatives, the use of a *wh*-form is obligatory only after a pied-piped preposition (148),[73] and when an adverbial clause precedes the subject of the relative (149).

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[71] Sigley (1997: 273) reports an overwhelming preference for *wh*-pronouns in all types of nonrestrictive relatives occurring in the Wellington Corpus of New Zealand English. The use of a *wh*-pronoun is also strongly favoured in non-embedded restrictive subject relatives with a human antecedent, and *wh*-pronouns are categorical when the relativised constituent is a genitive, or the object of a pied-piped preposition. However, when the relativised constituent is the object of a verb or stranded/deleted preposition, restrictive relatives usually appear without any overt relative marker, especially when the antecedent is human.

[72] Note that *wh*-pronouns rarely cooccur with preposition stranding in headed relatives. Householder's (1986: 158) survey of Modern English texts and corpora yielded only 17 instances of *wh*-pronouns in headed relatives with a stranded preposition. Of these, 2 involved the nominative form *who*, and 15 involved the objective form *whom*. By comparison, 43 of the headed relatives with a stranded preposition were introduced by *that*, and at least 152 lacked any overt relative marker (the last total may higher, because Householder's table does not provide the number of relevant tokens in the Brown Corpus).

[73] See also Sigley (1997: 273).

(148) Examples of restrictive relatives where the *wh*-pronoun is the object of a pied-piped preposition[74]

a. a tutor [for **whom** you have absolute reverence]
(John Ruskin, *Sesame and lilies*, London 1904 [1864]: 124)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 192]

b. I had nobody [to **whom** I could in confidence commit the secrecy of my circumstances to, and could depend upon for their secrecy]
(Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders* (The Abbey Classics) [1722]: 108)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 193]

(149) She is the daughter of a lady, [**who**, when she was a beautiful girl herself, and I was very many years younger, I loved very dearly]
(Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*, London 1900 (Macmillan) (1839): 566) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 243]

Wh-pronouns are fairly common in restrictive subject relatives (144), but when the relativised constituent is the object of a verb or stranded preposition, the *wh*-pronoun is preferentially omitted (150)-(151) (cf. Sigley 1997: 273).[75]

(150) Mr. Clutterbuck, you are speaking of the man [Ø I love].
(P.G. Wodehouse, *French leave*, London (Penguin) 1992 [1956]: 205)

(151) No doubt he reminds him of the horrible men [Ø he used to go about London with in his younger days]
(P.G. Wodehouse, *Summer lightening*, (Pan) 1929: 25) [Visser 1963: 404]

As can be seen from the examples in (145)-(146), (149), and also (152), the *wh*-object of a verb or stranded preposition in a headed relative may surface either in the objective form *whom* or in the nominative *who*, although *who* tends to be favoured in Present-Day English.

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[74] As (148b) illustrates, pied-piping may cooccur with preposition stranding in headed relatives. The occurrence of two instances of the same preposition in the relative could be seen as supporting evidence for an analysis of movement as feature-copying (cf. Chomsky 1995: 251ff). If we assume that movement involves the copying rather than displacement of a constituent to a new position, the cooccurrence of the pied-piped and stranded *to* in (149b) could be argued to arise from the spelling out of both copies of the preposition.

[75] The absence of an overt *wh*-pronoun is marked with 'Ø' in the examples.

(152) Examples of restrictive relatives where the *wh*-pronoun is the object of a verb or stranded preposition

a. a man [**whom** no pure-minded girl should be allowed to know] and [**whom** no chaste woman should sit in the same room with]
(Oscar Wilde, *The picture of Dorian Gray*, New York [1891]: 154)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 189]

b. the man [**who** we last saw on the platform] (H. Seton Merriman [H.S. Scott], *The sowers*, London 1905 (1896): 21)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 243]

When the *wh*-pronoun occurs after a pied-piped preposition (147)-(148), on the other hand, the objective form *whom* is strongly favoured. Sigley's (1997: 273) search of the Wellington Corpus of New Zealand English yielded 57 headed relatives with a human antecedent and pied-piped preposition, and in every one of them the *wh*-pronoun surfaces in the objective form *whom*. Similarly, all of the examples collected by Jespersen (1949 [1927]) involve *whom*, and Householder's (1986: 158) survey of Modern English texts and corpora yielded many examples of *whom* in headed relatives involving pied-piping, but not a single instance of *who*.

3.8.2 The extension of *whom* to nominative contexts

Although most existing studies of *who* and *whom* have focused on the use of the nominative form *who* in objective contexts, we also find instances of the objective *whom* where we might expect *who*.

Jespersen (1934 [1924]: 117, 348-350), Kayne (1984: 2-6, 19 n.10), Radford (1988: 575f), Sigley (1997: 68f, 273ff), and Lasnik & Sobin (2000: 345, 356f) all point out that both *who* and *whom* occur in complex headed relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of an embedded clause, no matter whether the embedded clause is non-finite (153) or finite (154)-(155).[76]

[76] Jespersen (1949 [1927]: 196) terms this kind of construction 'relative concatenation', and notes that it tends to occur with verbs like *say, hear, fear*. According to Jespersen (1949 [1927]: 198), authors such as Benjamin Franklin alternate freely between *who* and *whom* in headed relatives of this type.

(153) Examples illustrating the occurrence of *who* and *whom* in headed relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of a non-finite embedded clause

a. Prince William [**who**$_i$ everyone expected [t_i to run amok in the abbey]] (Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English: C14 062) [Sigley 1997: 275]

b. they murdered all they met [**whom**$_i$ they supposed [t_i to be gentlemen]] (Charlotte M. Yonge, *Kings of England*: 125) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 87f]

(154) Example illustrating the occurrence of *who* and *whom* in restrictive relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of a finite embedded clause[77]

a. We feed children [**who**$_i$ we think [t_i are hungry]].

b. We feed children [**whom**$_i$ we think [t_i are hungry]].

(Jespersen 1934 [1924]: 348)

(155) Examples illustrating the occurrence of both *who* and *whom* in nonrestrictive relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of an embedded clause

a. except of course your esteemed mother, [**who**$_i$ we all agree [t_i is perfect]] (Arnold Bennett, *Mr. Prohack*, London 1922: 258) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 201]

b. There was a man, too, [**whom**$_i$ she had only just time to realize [t_i was the doctor, not the undertaker]] (Compton Mackenzie, *Carnival*, London 1922 [1912]: 7) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 198]

This variation between *who* and *whom* contrasts with the obligatory selection of *who* in simple headed relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of a finite clause (156)-(157).

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[77] Note that the occurrence of *who* and *whom* is more common in complex nonrestrictive relatives than in complex restrictive relatives of this type, because, as noted by Jespersen (1934 [1924]: 349f), the *wh*-pronoun is frequently omitted when the relative clause is restrictive (i).

(i) We feed children [**Ø**$_i$ we think [t_i are hungry]].

(156) Example illustrating the obligatory selection of *who* in simple restrictive relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of a finite clause

a. We feed children [**who** are hungry].

b. * We feed children [**whom** are hungry].

(Jespersen 1934 [1924]: 349)

(157) Example illustrating the obligatory selection of *who* in simple nonrestrictive relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of a finite clause[78]

a. deserted by all the company except the uncle of young Nightingale, [**who** loved his bottle as well as Western himself] (Henry Fielding, *The history of Tom Jones*, London (Guild) 1981 [1749]: 631)

b. * except the uncle of young Nightingale, [**whom** loved his bottle as well as Western himself]

Jespersen (1949 [1927]: 199f) and Lasnik & Sobin (2000: 345 n.4) observe that *who* is also strongly favoured when the *wh*-subject in a simple headed relative is followed by a parenthetical (158).[79]

[78] While example (157a) is taken from an 18th century text, it is also perfectly grammatical in Present-Day English. (157b) is clearly ungrammatical in Present-Day English. Since it is impossible to obtain grammaticality judgments from 18th century speakers, we will never know for certain whether sentences like (157b) would have been equally ungrammatical in 18th century English. The ready occurrence of examples such as (157a) and apparent absence of examples like (157b) from 18th century texts, does however suggest that *whom* was at least strongly disfavoured in this context. I would like to thank Diane Massam for drawing my attention to this issue.

[79] Compare also Kayne's (1984: 3, 19 n.10) observations about parentheticals and case in headed relatives.

(158) Examples illustrating the preferential selection of *who* in simple headed relatives where the *wh*-pronoun is followed by a parenthetical[80]

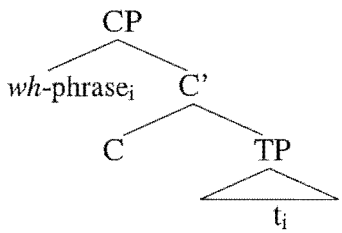
a. There was one H-, [**who**, I learned, in after days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in the hulks] (Charles Lamb, *The essays of Elia*, London 1899 [1823 & 1833] (Dent): 1.25) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 200]

b.*?There was one H-, [**whom**, I learned, in after days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in the hulks]

3.8.3 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case and Def-Case

Headed relatives differ from free relatives in that the *wh*-pronoun introducing a headed relative quite clearly occupies a CP-internal positition at Spell-Out, and does not seem to be able to undergo head-movement out of the relative CP (159).

(159) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of the *wh*-phrase in headed relatives



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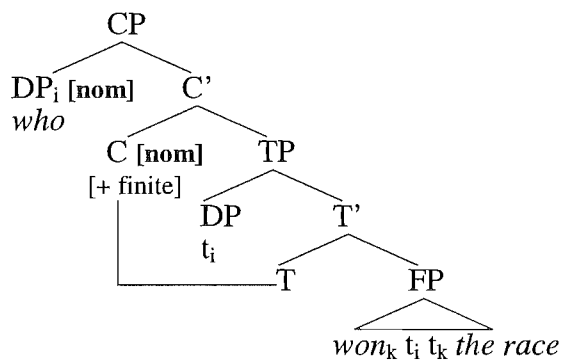
[80] As discussed in footnote 78, it is impossible to obtain grammaticality judgments from 18th-19th century speakers. The occurrence of (158a) paired with the apparent absence of examples like (158b) from 18th-19th century texts suggests that *whom* was disfavoured in this context, but we will never know for certain whether Charles Lamb and his contemporaries would have considered (158b) to be markedly degraded or not. In Present-Day English, (158a) would seem to be clearly preferable to (158b), although both have a rather literary, archaic flavour, which may affect our grammaticality judgments. It is worth noting that the extension of *whom* to embedded subject relatives appears to be largely confined to written texts in Present-Day English. If a subject *wh*-pronoun preceding a parenthetical had the same case status as the fronted *wh*-subject of an embedded relative clause, the literary flavour of (158) should actually predispose present-day speakers towards favouring *whom* over *who*. The present-day preference for *who* over *whom* before the parenthetical in (158) would thus seem to provide quite strong evidence that the case status of the *wh*-pronoun in sentences like (158) is different from the case status of the fronted *wh*-subject in examples like (i).

(i) Martin had obtained a flashlight and was desperately searching for Hanna [**whom**$_i$ he thought [t_i was in her cabin below]]
(Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English: F19 112) [Sigley 1997: 68]

The structure in (159) would lead us to expect that the distribution of *wh*-forms in headed relatives should be identical to the distribution of *wh*-forms in embedded questions (cf. Section 3.5), because the *wh*-pronoun appears in the same syntactic environment in both types of *wh*-construction:[81]

When the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of a simple headed relative, it will be linked to nominative Arg-Case, and will also be able to check nominative Pos-Case, because it heads the *wh*-phrase in [Spec, CP], and no overt constituent intervenes between finite C and T at Spell-Out (160).

(160) Tree diagram which illustrates nominative Pos-Case checking between finite C and a *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] in a simple headed subject relative such as *(the man) who won the race*[82]



The case constraints thus correctly predict that the *wh*-pronoun will always surface in the nominative form *who* in simple subject relatives.

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[81] Law (2000: 182) argues that relative pronouns do not occupy [Spec, CP] at Spell-Out, but instead appear in a position adjoined to TP (in finite clauses) or VP (in *to* infinitives).
For relative pronouns that function as the object of a verb or stranded preposition, or as the subject of an embedded clause, Law's analysis will yield the same case predictions as the [Spec, CP] analysis adopted here, provided we assume that a given agreement-related functional head can only check Pos-Case once (cf. Section 3.3.2). This will ensure that the *wh*-pronoun is unable to check Pos-Case in relatives that already contain an overt subject, even if a TP-adjunct is assumed to have the same syntactic status as a specifier of TP (cf. Kayne 1994: 16f; Law 2000: 194 fn.11).
In the structural analysis proposed by Law (2000: 182), only an assumption of syntactic equivalence between adjuncts and specifiers of TP will allow us to account for the consistent selection of the nominative *who* in simple headed subject relatives, and yet retain the generalisation that all *wh*-phrases occupy the same surface position in headed relatives. Since a *wh*-pronoun is only able to check nominative Pos-Case if it occupies [Spec, TP] or [Spec, CP] at Spell-Out, the *wh*-subject of a simple headed relative must be analysed as occupying [Spec, TP], if it is to receive nominative Pos-Case in Law's analysis. If we want to argue that all *wh*-phrases occupy the same surface position in headed relatives, we will therefore have to assume that the TP-adjoined position occupied by *wh*-pronouns in finite clauses is equivalent to a [Spec, TP] position.

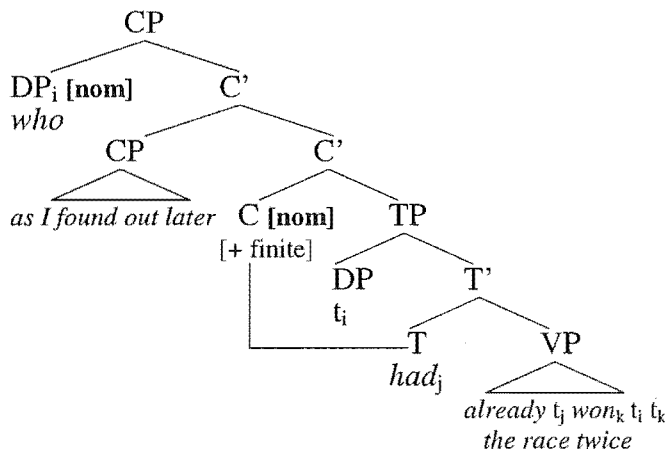
[82] FP = maximal projection of the functional head the lexical verb occupies at Spell-Out; as discussed in Section 2.2.2.1, I am assuming that the lexical verb always undergoes overt movement to a functional head beyond *v*P in English. The verb therefore precedes the lowest trace of the subject DP in the tree diagram.

As we saw in Section 3.8.2, *who* is also clearly favoured in headed subject relatives where the *wh*-pronoun is followed by a parenthetical (161).

(161) John, [**who**, as I found out later, had already won the race twice]

Since finite C cannot inherit the ability to check nominative Pos-Case if it is separated from T by an overt constituent at Spell-Out, the parenthetical in relatives like (161) is best analysed as a C'- rather than TP-adjunct.[83] As such, it will not intervene between C and T at Spell-Out, and is also unable to interfere with spec-head agreement between C and the *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] (162).[84]

(162) Tree diagram which illustrates nominative Pos-Case checking between finite C and a *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] in a simple headed subject relative where the *wh*-pronoun is followed by a parenthetical



In headed subject relatives where the *wh*-phrase functions as the subject of an embedded clause, the *wh*-pronoun will be unable to check nominative Pos-Case, because the subject of the higher clause intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out (163).

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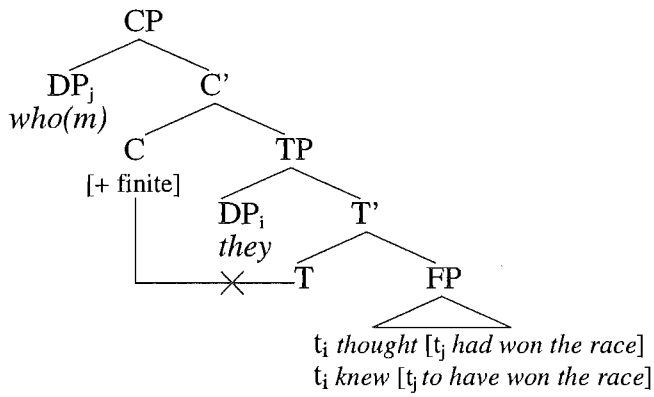
[83] As mentioned in footnote 9 and Section 3.6.2, I am assuming that the ability to check nominative Pos-Case can be passed on to C through a PF merger with T under adjacency (where PF stands for Phonological Form). Unlike Bobaljik (1994: 2), who argues that intervening adjuncts have no bearing on the kind of adjacency required for a PF merger between two nodes, I am assuming that C is only able to inherit the relevant Pos-Case features from T when absolutely no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out. In my approach, the presence of an overt adjunct between C and T would thus prevent C from acquiring the ability to check nominative Pos-Case on a DP in [Spec, CP].

[84] The approach proposed here could be seen as a rough minimalist equivalent of Taglicht's (1998) HPSG analysis of parentheticals, which assumes that a parenthetical node 'is always a noninitial and nonfinal daughter of its mother' (196, 206), 'for which the grammar specifies no function in relation to any sister node' (195, 205).

(163) Tree diagram which illustrates why there is no Pos-Case checking between finite C and a *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] in a headed relative where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of an embedded finite or nonfinite clause

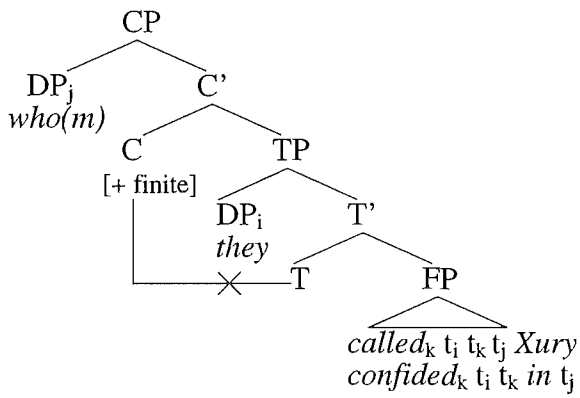


Since the *wh*-pronoun in (163) does not occupy a Pos-Case position at Spell-Out, it will receive objective Def-Case as well as the nominative Arg-Case which encodes its status as the highest structural argument of the embedded predicate.[85]

When the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb or stranded preposition in a headed relative, it will be linked to objective Arg-Case, and it will again be unable to check Pos-Case, because the subject of the relative clause intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out (164).

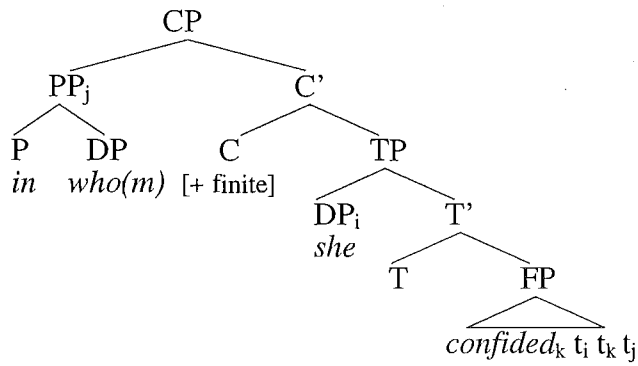
[85] In some earlier discussions of *wh*-case in complex subject relatives, the use of *whom* was argued to arise from objective case assignment to the *wh*-pronoun by the higher verb (i.e. *thought* or *knew* in (163)) in the course of the derivation (cf. Kayne 1984: 5f, 19 n.11; Radford 1988: 575f). Such an analysis is ruled out in the approach proposed here, because neither Arg-Case nor Pos-Case is designed to encode intermediate syntactic relations between a head and a DP that does not function as the argument of this head. As discussed in Chapter 2, Pos-Case encodes the surface relation between an overt DP and an agreement-related functional head, and Arg-Case only applies to arguments of a predicate. Since the *wh*-pronoun in (163) neither functions as an argument of the higher verb (*thought, knew*), nor appears in an associated [Spec, *v*P] position at Spell-Out, the case properties of the higher verb can have no bearing on the case form the *wh*-pronoun surfaces in.

(164) Tree diagram which illustrates why there is no Pos-Case checking between finite C and a *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] in a headed relative where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb or stranded preposition



In headed relatives where the preposition is pied-piped with the *wh*-pronoun, the *wh*-pronoun is likewise unable to check Pos-Case, because it appears as the complement of the preposition at Spell-Out (165), and prepositions are unable to check Pos-Case (cf. Section 2.2.3).

(165) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of the *wh*-pronoun in a headed relative where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a pied-piped preposition



The absence of Pos-Case checking on the *wh*-pronoun in (164) and (165) means that any *wh*-pronoun that functions as the object of a verb or preposition in a headed relative is influenced by the Arg-Case and Def-Case constraints, both of which call for the objective form *whom* in this context.

The occurrence of *who* in non-subject relatives can be seen as the result of competition between the case constraints and the trend towards invariant *who*.

The particular preference for *whom* after prepositions could be argued to provide evidence for the additional influence of the tendency towards *whom* in

complement positions and *who* in specifier positions, which is also evident in sluiced questions involving prepositions (cf. Section 3.6.2).

However, nothing in the analysis presented so far could explain why the tendency towards *who* should be weaker in headed relatives than in embedded questions.[86]

If we assume that *wh*-pronouns in headed relatives are subject to the same clause-internal case influences as *wh*-pronouns in embedded questions, then we must look to the relation between the *wh*-pronoun and the matrix clause for an explanation of the case differences.
McCreight (1988: 74f) suggests that case agreement between the head of a relative and the relative pronoun can lead to multiple case assignment to the relative pronoun:

> a relative pronoun may be assigned case within its clause and
> then also acquire the case originally assigned to its antecedent
> in the main clause (McCreight 1988: 17f)

As we saw in the introduction to Section 3.8 (examples (139)-(140)), case agreement between the relative pronoun and its antecedent was common in Old

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[86] Note that this is also a major drawback of the analysis proposed by Lasnik & Sobin (2000). Lasnik & Sobin (2000) argue that *who* is the basic form of the *wh*-pronoun, which can check either NOM (= nominative) or ACC (=objective) case. The form *whom* is assumed to contain an additional ACC case feature which is associated with the suffix *-m* and has to be checked independently of the case feature associated with the stem *who* (Lasnik & Sobin 2000: 354). In Lasnik & Sobin's (2000) approach, the ACC feature associated with the suffix must be checked either by the Basic 'whom' Rule (i), or the Extended 'whom' Rule (ii), both of which have the status of grammatical viruses.

(i) **Basic 'whom' Rule** (Lasnik & Sobin 2000: 354)

If:	[$_{V/P}$]	*who*	*-m*
		[ACC]	[ACC]
	1	2	3

then: check ACC on 2.

(ii) **Extended 'whom' Rule** (Lasnik & Sobin 2000: 359)

If:	*who*	*-m*	...	NP,	where
		[ACC]			
	1	2		3	

a) 3 is the nearest subject NP to 2, and
b) '...' does not contain a V which has 1-2 (a single word *whom*) as its subject,
then: check ACC on 2.

Since the Extended 'whom' Rule (ii) accounts for the occurrence of initial *whom* in any type of *wh*-construction where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of an embedded clause, or as the object of a verb or stranded preposition, Lasnik & Sobin's (2000) approach would predict that *whom* should be equally favoured in (matrix and embedded) *wh*-questions as in headed relatives.

English relatives introduced by *se ðe*. It is also attested in Latin, Ancient Greek, and Old High German (cf. Bianchi 2000: 58).

In the approach proposed here, the only case a relative pronoun could inherit from its antecedent is the Arg-Case of the antecedent. As discussed in Chapter 2 and in earlier sections of Chapter 3, the Pos-Case and Def-Case status of a DP is determined entirely by its position relative to certain agreement-related functional heads at Spell-Out. This emphasis on surface configurations means that Pos-Case and Def-Case cannot be transmitted from (the head of) a DP in one position to (the head of) a DP in another.

If we assume that *wh*-pronouns are able to inherit the Arg-Case of their antecedent, the case status of *wh*-pronouns in headed relatives will be similar to that of *wh*-pronouns introducing a free relative in a *pro*-head analysis of free relatives (cf. Section 3.7.3): When a headed relative modifies the object of a verb or preposition, the *wh*-pronoun will inherit objective Arg-Case from its antecedent, and when the headed relative modifies a subject, the *wh*-pronoun will inherit nominative Arg-Case.

As mentioned earlier, Pos-Case generally overrides Arg-Case in Present-Day English. This means that the influence of matrix Arg-Case requirements is most likely to be evident when the *wh*-pronoun is unable to check nominative Pos-Case, i.e. in headed relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb or preposition (164)-(165), and also in headed relatives where the *wh*-phrase functions as the subject of an embedded clause (163).[87]

The greater tolerance of *whom* in headed relatives than in embedded questions can thus be argued to arise from the reinforcement of relative-internal Arg-Case and Def-Case through objective matrix case.[88] The influence of objective matrix case would be predicted to outweigh the influence of nominative matrix case, because the *wh*-pronoun can inherit objective Arg-Case from a wider range of antecedents: Both objects of verbs and objects of prepositions receive objective Arg-Case, but nominative Arg-Case only appears on subjects.

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[87] The occurrence of matrix Arg-Case on relative pronouns that function as the subject of a simple headed relative in Old English (139)-(140), suggests that Pos-Case was less influential in earlier periods of English than it is now (cf. Chapter 10 for a more detailed discussion).

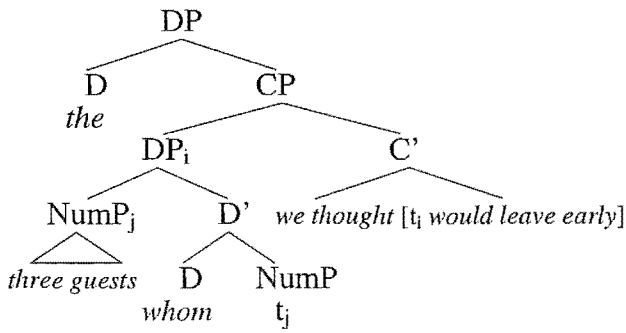
[88] In headed relatives where the *wh*-phrase functions as the subject of an embedded clause, the objective Arg-Case assigned to the antecedent of the *wh*-pronoun will reinforce relative-internal Def-Case. In headed relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the object of a verb or preposition, the objective matrix case will reinforce relative-internal Def-Case and Arg-Case requirements.

The trends summarised in Sections 3.8.1 and 3.8.2 indicate that the Arg-Case assigned to the antecedent of the *wh*-pronoun has a similar influence on the distribution of *wh*-forms in restrictive relatives as in nonrestrictive relatives. This suggests that the differences between restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses are largely irrelevant to case agreement between the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent.

One way to capture the *wh*-case similarities between restrictive and nonrestrictive relatives would be to assume that the syntactic relationship between the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent at Spell-Out is the same in restrictive relatives as in nonrestrictive relatives (cf. Kayne 1994: 110f). Such an approach would allow us to restrict case agreement between a *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent to a single syntactic configuration.

Kayne (1994: 87-90, 110f) and Bianchi (2000: 61-69) both advocate an approach to headed relatives that is reminiscent of the syntactic analysis adopted for free relatives in Section 3.7.3: The relative CP is immediately dominated by a DP, and the *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] is assumed to be governed by the head of this DP. The nominal projection 'heading' the relative is base-generated as the complement of an overt or covert *wh*-pronoun, and raises to the specifier of the *wh*-phrase before Spell-Out (166).

(166) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic relation between the *wh*-pronoun and the D which receives the matrix Arg-Case if headed relatives are analysed along the lines proposed in Kayne (1994) and Bianchi (2000)[89]



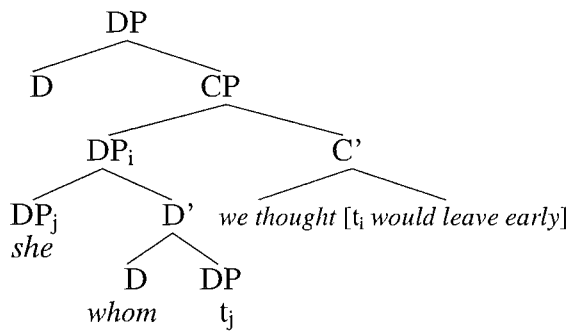
If both restrictive and nonrestrictive relatives have the structure outlined in (166), then the transmission of matrix Arg-Case to the *wh*-pronoun in a headed relative

[89] Kayne (1994: 90f) and Bianchi (2000: 62) assume that the nominal projection base-generated as the complement of the *wh*-pronoun is NP, but if we adopt the approach to noun phrase structure outlined in Section 2.2.2.3, the category of the complement must be NumP.

can be argued to depend on a government relation between the D heading the relative structure, and the *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP].[90]

However, the assumption that the antecedent of the *wh*-pronoun is generated as a complement of the *wh*-pronoun itself is rather problematic, especially when the the antecedent is a proper noun or a personal pronoun.[91] Proper nouns and pronouns are clearly DPs rather than NPs or NumPs, and personal pronouns are generally assumed to occupy D at Spell-Out (cf. Abney 1987, Longobardi 1994: 635ff).[92] This means that we will either have to assume that the nominal projection base-generated as the complement of the *wh*-pronoun may have the category DP rather than NumP (167), or that pronouns can undergo head-movement out of the specifier of the *wh*-phrase to the head of the DP dominating the headed relative (168).

(167) Tree diagram illustrating the structure of a headed relative modifying a personal pronoun if we want to argue that the pronoun is base-generated within the relative clause and occupies the specifier of the *wh*-phrase at Spell-Out

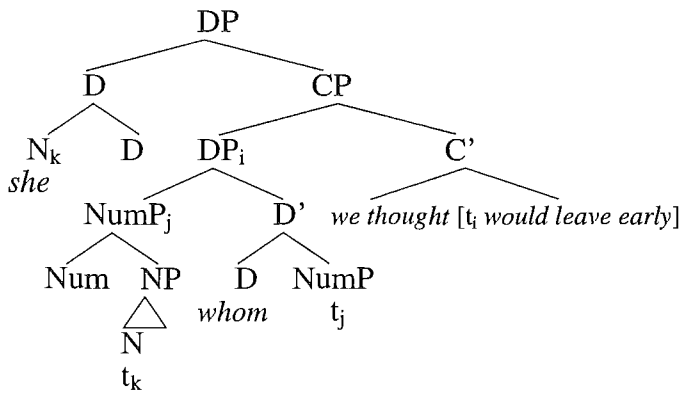


[90] Compare the government relationship required for agreement between the *wh*-pronoun and *pro* in the *pro*-head analysis of free relatives presented in Section 3.7.3.

[91] See Borsley (1997), Alexiadou et al. (2000: 16-20), and Platzack (2000: 276f, 286f) for further discussion of Kayne's (1994) analysis of headed relatives.

[92] Longobardi (1994: 641f) argues that proper nouns occupy a position lower than D at Spell-Out because they may follow adjectives in set phrases such as *poor Jim, good old John*. As we will see in Section 4.16, (strong) personal pronouns may also appear after adjectives in a small number of set phrases such as *lucky you, poor little me*, but they always precede numerals (*you two, we three*), which suggests that they usually occupy a position higher than Num. In view of the exceptional nature of the phrases where proper nouns and pronouns occur after adjectives, I will assume that both pronouns and proper nouns generally occupy D at Spell-Out, although they are not necessarily base-generated in this position (cf. Section 4.16 and Chapter 5 for further discussion).

(168) Tree diagram illustrating the structure of a headed relative modifying a personal pronoun if we want to argue that the pronoun is base-generated within the relative clause but raises to the head of the DP dominating the relative clause[93]



Both of these options would weaken our model of phrase structure and movement:

If we want to assume that pronouns modified by a headed relative are base-generated as DPs, we will have to allow D to take DP complements as well as NumP complements.

If we want to argue that personal pronouns can undergo head-movement out of the specifier of the *wh*-phrase, we will have to provide an account of how the trace of the pronoun can be licensed even though it appears within the specifier of the *wh*-phrase.[94]

The drawbacks of the approach advocated by Kayne (1994) and Bianchi (2000) suggest that it might be preferable to assume that case agreement between a *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent is licensed by an interpretive rather than a syntactic relation (cf. Bianchi 2000: 59; Alexiadou et al. 2000: 3). This would allow us to adopt an adjunction analysis of headed relatives where the antecedent of the *wh*-pronoun is base-generated outside the relative CP, and the syntactic relationship between the head of the antecedent phrase and the *wh*-pronoun is not one of strict head government.

Unlike Kayne's (1994: 110f) approach, an adjunction analysis of headed relatives is able to capture the scopal differences between restrictive and

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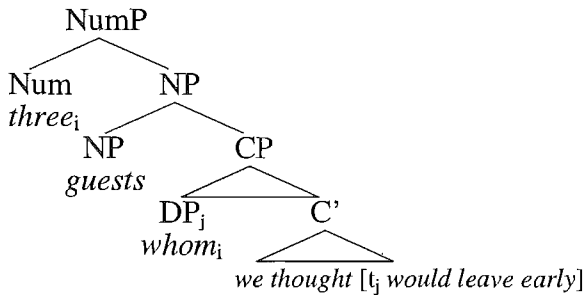
[93] Note that this analysis is incompatible with any approach where all pronouns are assumed to be base-generated in D rather than N (cf. Abney 1987; Longobardi 1994: 635ff). See Cardinaletti (1994: 198-205) for evidence supporting the assumption that strong pronouns are base-generated as Ns rather than Ds, but generally undergo head-movement to D before Spell-Out.

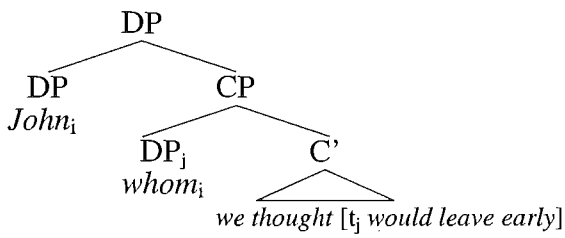
[94] As discussed in Sections 3.7.3 and 3.7.5, it is normally only the head of the phrase in [Spec, CP] that can raise to a higher head position. Thus, in (168), only the *wh*-pronoun should be able to raise to the higher D, because the *wh*-pronoun heads the DP in [Spec, CP].

nonrestrictive relatives in the surface syntax (cf. McCreight 1988: 73-83, Alexiadou et al. 2000: 5, 9). Thus, a relative clause adjoined to NP (169) will necessarily have a restrictive interpretation, and a relative clause adjoined to DP (170) will always be nonrestrictive (cf. Demirdache 1991, Alexiadou et al. 2000: 5).

(169) Tree diagram illustrating the position of the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent if the relative clause is adjoined to NP (cf. Lobeck 1995: 184)



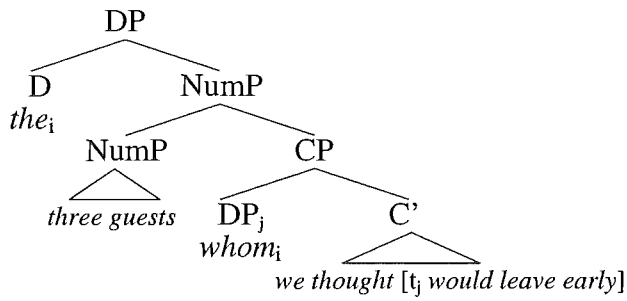
(170) Tree diagram illustrating the position of the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent if the relative clause is adjoined to DP



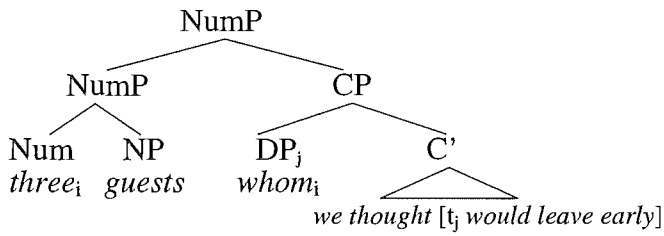
A relative clause adjoined to NumP will be restrictive if the antecedent is definite and thus projects a DP-layer (171), but it will be nonrestrictive if the antecedent is indefinite and fails to project a DP-layer (172).[95]

[95] In all of the tree diagrams, the interpretive relation between the *wh*-pronoun and the head of the highest layer projected by its antecedent is indicated by coindexation. As noted in Section 3.7.3, I am assuming that Arg-Case is generally linked to the head of a DP argument. If we want to argue that the *wh*-pronoun may be influenced by matrix Arg-Case even when its antecedent fails to project a DP-layer, we will have to assume that Arg-Case is linked not to D, but to the highest head in the noun phrase structure. For definite noun phrases, this head will be D, for indefinite noun phrases, it will be Num.

(171) Tree diagram illustrating the position of the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent if the relative clause is adjoined to NumP and the antecedent projects a DP-layer



(172) Tree diagram illustrating the position of the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent if the relative clause is adjoined to NumP and the antecedent fails to project a DP-layer



3.9 Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case, and the distribution of *wh*-forms in Present-Day English

The case trends summarised in this chapter suggest that the case of *wh*-pronouns is considerably more variable than the case of weak personal pronouns in Present-Day English (cf. Section 1.4, and Chapter 2).[96] As I have tried to demonstrate, one important property that contributes to the case variation in *wh*-constructions is the fact that *wh*-phrases do not normally appear in canonical argument positions at Spell-Out. As a result, *wh*-pronouns are either entirely

[96] The distinction between weak and strong pronouns in English will be examined in more detail in Chapter 5.

unable to check Pos-Case, or are subject to different Pos-Case requirements than weak personal pronouns.[97]

In Chapter 2, I argued that an argument DP checks nominative Pos-Case if it occupies [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out in a finite clause, and its surface position is different from its θ-position. To be able to check objective Pos-Case, an argument DP must appear either in [Spec, *v*P], or in [Spec, TP] of a non-finite clause introduced by *for*.

The position of *wh*-pronouns and free relatives in V-particle constructions suggests that *wh*-pronouns are unlikely to head a DP in [Spec, *v*P].[98] The occurrence of *wh*-constructions in [Spec, TP] of a non-finite clause introduced by *for* seems to be equally marginal.[99] *Wh*-pronouns are thus generally unable to check objective Pos-Case.

If we assume that *wh*-pronouns must either be base-generated in [Spec, CP][100] or raise to [Spec, CP] before Spell-Out, only a *wh*-pronoun introducing a free relative could conceivably appear in [Spec, TP] of a finite clause and check nominative Pos-Case in this position (170).[101]

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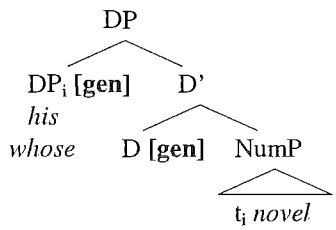
[97] The only exception is possessive *wh*-pronouns, which occupy [Spec, DP] at Spell-Out and thus always check genitive Pos-Case, just like possessive personal pronouns (i). See Section 3.1 for further discussion.

(i)



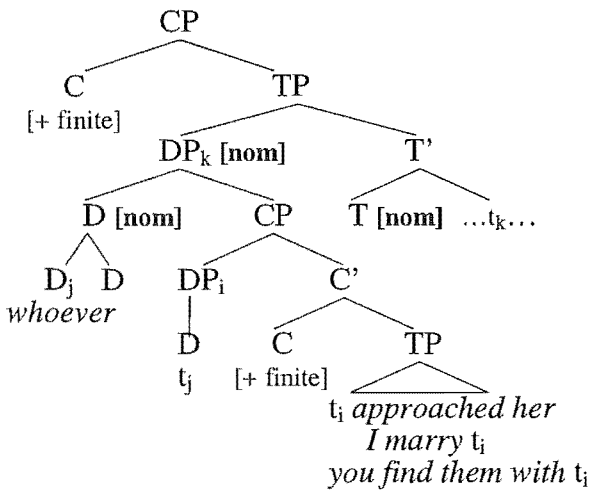
[98] See Sections 3.4.2, 3.7.3, and 3.7.5 for discussion.

[99] I have not come across any naturally occurring instances of *wh*-pronouns or free relatives in this position, and I have not found any mention of such a possibility in existing discussions of *wh*-constructions.

[100] For more detail, see the discussion of sluiced questions in Section 3.6.2, and the analysis of free (non-subject) relatives involving VP ellipsis or Null Complement Anaphora proposed in Section 3.7.5.

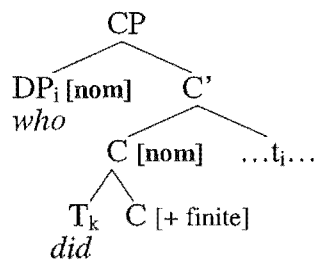
[101] As can be seen from the tree diagram in (173), the *wh*-pronoun will only be able to enter into nominative Pos-Case checking with the matrix T, if it is analysed as heading the free relative DP at Spell-Out (cf. Section 3.7.3 for a more detailed discussion of possible syntactic analyses of free relatives).

(173)



However, the distribution of *wh*-forms in questions and relative clauses suggests that *wh*-pronouns are also able to check nominative Pos-Case when they head the *wh*-phrase in [Spec, CP] of a finite clause and T has raised to C (174)[102] or no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out (175).[103]

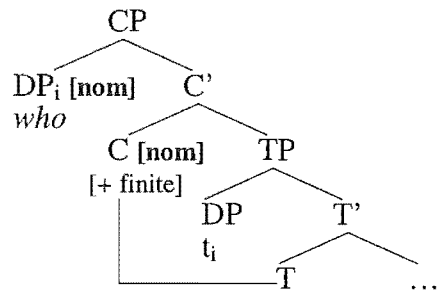
(174) Finite C and raised T combine to check nominative Pos-Case on an argument DP in [Spec, CP]



[102] As in matrix interrogatives questioning the object of a verb or stranded preposition (cf. Section 3.2.2).

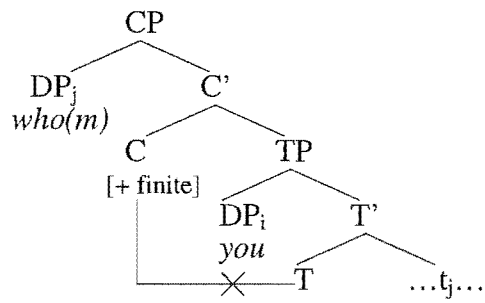
[103] As in subject questions (cf. Sections 3.2.2 and 3.5.2), and simple headed subject relatives (cf. Section 3.8.3). In free subject relatives, the *wh*-pronoun will only appear in this configuration at Spell-Out if we assume that the relative DP is headed by *pro* (cf. Section 3.7.3)

(175) Finite C and T combine to check nominative Pos-Case on an argument DP in [Spec, CP] when no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out

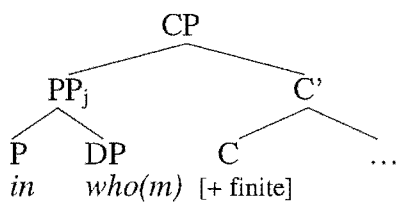


Nominative Pos-Case checking between finite C and a *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] is impossible when an overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out (176), and when the *wh*-pronoun fails to head the *wh*-phrase (177).

(176) Finite C is unable to check nominative Pos-Case on its specifier when an overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out



(177) A *wh*-pronoun is unable to check nominative Pos-Case if it appears within a pied-piped PP



When a *wh*-pronoun fails to check Pos-Case, its surface form will be determined by Arg-Case and Def-Case:

The Def-Case constraint calls for *whom* in all positions not covered by Pos-Case.

The Arg-Case constraint stipulates that the *wh*-pronoun will surface as *who* when it functions as the subject of a clause, and as *whom* if it functions as the object of a verb or preposition. In relative clauses, the surface form of the *wh*-pronoun is influenced not only by CP-internal Arg-Case requirements, but also by the Arg-Case assigned to its antecedent (in headed relatives) or to the whole relative clause (in free relatives).[104]

The interaction of the three case constraints correctly predicts that speakers of Present-Day English should show an overwhelming preference for *who* over *whom* in matrix questions (178) and in simple subject relatives (179), but may nevertheless opt for *whom* in headed relatives where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject of an embedded clause (180).

(178) a. **Who** is hungry?
b. **Who** do you love?
c. **Who** did you give it to?

(179) We feed children [**who** are hungry].

(180) We feed children [**whom** we think are hungry].

However, the distribution of *wh*-forms reported in existing studies is not entirely predictable from the interaction of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case:

The occurrence of the nominative *who* in contexts where all applicable case constraints call for the objective form *whom* points towards a tendency towards invariant *who* in all *wh*-contexts.

The distribution of *wh*-forms in sluicing constructions, and the general preference for *whom* when the *wh*-pronoun appears as the complement of a preposition, suggest that the relative position of a *wh*-pronoun within a construction has a bearing on the form it surfaces in:

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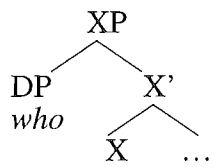
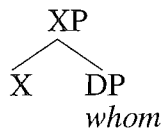
[104] See Sections 3.7.3, 3.7.5, and 3.8.3 for further discusion.

When the *wh*-pronoun appears as the specifier of a phrase such as PP or CP, and thus asymmetrically c-commands the remaining constituents of the phrase (181), it will tend to surface as *who*.[105]
When the *wh*-pronoun appears as the complement of a head (182), it will tend to surface as *whom*.

(181) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic configuration that favours the use of the nominative *wh*-form *who*



(182) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic configuration that favours the use of the objective *wh*-form *whom*



The data presented in this chapter thus suggest that the distribution of *wh*-forms in Present-Day English cannot be accounted for purely in terms of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case, but is influenced by a trend towards invariant *who* as well as a tendency to use *who* in initial/specifier positions, and *whom* in final/complement positions.

In Chapter 4, I will present evidence from existing studies which suggests that it is not just *wh*-pronouns that are susceptible to non-case influences. When personal pronouns are coordinated, modified, or appear in non-canonical positions, their surface form is just as difficult to predict in a purely case-based approach as the surface form of *wh*-pronouns.

[105]A constituent X asymmetrically c-commands a constituent Y iff X c-commands Y **and** Y does not c-command X (cf. Kayne 1994: 4). The correlations between pronoun form and asymmetric c-command relationships will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

4 Pronoun case variation in Modern English, Part 2: personal pronouns

Table of chapter contents

4.0 Introduction

While Chapter 3 focused primarily on the distribution of the *wh*-forms *who* and *whom* in Present-Day English, this chapter looks at variation involving the personal pronoun forms *I/me, he/him, she/her, we/us, they/them.* Like Chapter 3, this chapter is divided into a series of sections dedicated to syntactic constructions that are prone to case variation. Each of the sections summarises the pronoun case trends reported in existing studies, and examines to what extent these case trends can be accounted for in terms of the three case constraints proposed in Chapter 2 (1)-(3).

(1) **Argument Case** (abbreviated as **Arg-Case**)
The overt case form of any structural argument of a predicate must comply with the structural linking between cases and arguments in the θ-structure.

In Modern English, **nominative case** has the structural feature [- higher], which means that it must be linked to the **highest structural argument** of a predicate.
Both **objective** and **genitive case** are unspecified for structural features, but objective case is restricted to arguments of [- N] predicates, while genitive case is limited to arguments of [+ N] predicates. This means that **objective case** must be linked to **all remaining structural arguments** of a **verb or preposition**, while **genitive case** must be linked to the **remaining structural argument** of a **noun**.

(2) **Positional Case** (abbreviated as **Pos-Case**)
The overt case form of an argument noun phrase appearing as the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out must match the case/agreement features of this functional head,
iff the position of the noun phrase at Spell-Out differs from its θ-position.

In Modern English the following functional heads are involved in the checking of Positional Case:

(a) **finite C** combines with **T** to check **nominative case** on a noun phrase in [Spec, TP]; when no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out, or T has raised to C before Spell-Out, C and T combine to check nominative case on a noun phrase in [Spec, CP]

(b) **non-finite C** filled by the complementizer ***for*** combines with **T** to check **objective case** on a noun phrase in [Spec, TP]

(c) ***v*** checks **objective case** on its specifier

(d) **D** checks **genitive case** on its specifier

(3) **Default Case** (abbreviated as **Def-Case**)
The overt case form of **any noun phrase not covered by the Positional Case constraint** must match the default case of a language.

In Modern English, the default case is the **objective**.

The pronoun case trends discussed in this chapter suggest that pronoun case variation occurs primarily in contexts not covered by the Positional Case constraint. That is, pronoun case is most likely to be variable if

(a) the pronoun does not have argument status,

(b) the pronoun does not appear in the specifier of an appropriate agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out, and/or

(c) the pronoun has failed to raise out of its θ-position.

When lone unmodified pronouns appear in contexts covered by Positional Case, they will generally surface in the case form required by the Positional Case constraint. Coordinated and modified pronouns, on the other hand, exhibit case variation even when they appear in contexts covered by Positional Case.

These pronoun case patterns point to a correlation between the surface form of a pronoun and its morphosyntactic status. As we will see in Chapter 5, lone

unmodified pronouns that have raised out of their θ-positions to occupy [Spec, TP] and [Spec, *v*P] at Spell-Out are weak; *wh*-pronouns and personal pronouns appearing in other syntactic contexts are strong. The data discussed in Chapters 2 to 4 suggest that weak pronouns exhibit the consistent nominative/objective case distinction predicted by the interaction of Positional Case, Argument Case, and Default Case. The surface form of a strong pronoun, on the other hand, appears to be affected not only by the three case constraints, but also by non-case influences. The case form of a strong pronoun tends to reflect its relative position within a syntactic construction, and there is an overall tendency towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them, who* in strong pronoun contexts. In Chapter 8, these trends are captured in two Relative Positional Case constraints (4)-(5) and a set of Invariant Strong Form constraints (6).

(4) **Relative Positional Coding 1**

If a constituent A asymmetrically c-commands a constituent B in a given syntactic construction,
then A must be **gracile**, and B must be **robust**.

The set of gracile pronoun forms comprises: *me, he, she, we, they, who*
The set of robust pronoun forms comprises: *I, him, her, us, them, whom*

(5) **Relative Positional Coding 2**

If a constituent A asymmetrically c-commands a constituent B in a given syntactic construction,
then B must be **more robust** than A.

In the set of gracile pronoun forms, *they* is more robust than *me, he, she, we.*

(6) **Invariant Strong Form**

The morphological form of **strong pronoun forms** must be **invariant** in all contexts. There is a separate Invariant constraint for each pronoun.

The invariant personal pronoun forms are: *me, him, her, us, them*
The invariant *wh*-forms are: *who, whoever*

Chapter 4 is organised as follows:

Section 4.1 looks at pronoun case in topicalisation structures. Topicalised pronouns resemble the *wh*-pronouns discussed in Chapter 3 in that they appear in

clause-initial position at Spell-Out, and are linked to an empty argument position within the clause.

Sections 4.2 to 4.4 are dedicated to left-dislocated, right-dislocated, and independent pronouns, which can be argued to lack the argument status required for Argument Case assignment and Positional Case checking.

Section 4.5 considers the case of pronouns after *be* in basic identificational sentences, *it BE* constructions, and *it*-clefts. I will argue that the occurrence of case variation after *be* arises from the lack of an agentive/causative *v*P-layer in the extended projection of the verb *be*. The absence of the *v*P-layer means that the pronoun following *be* is unable to check objective Positional Case.

V-*ing* constructions, non-finite *to*-clauses, and small clauses are the focus of Sections 4.6 to 4.8. What all of these constructions have in common is the ability to occur as arguments of a higher predicate, and the lack of a construction-internal functional projection associated with nominative Pos-Case assignment.

Sections 4.9 and 4.10 examine the case variation found with pronouns occurring in gapping and bare argument ellipsis. Both of these constructions will be argued to lack certain agreement-related functional projections at Spell-Out.

Case variation in coordinates with DP conjuncts is discussed in Section 4.11. Existing evidence suggests that the distribution of pronoun forms in coordinates is strongly influenced by factors other than case. While the three case constraints clearly affect the case of conjoined pronouns, there appear to be important distributional differences between 1sg and non-1sg case forms, which are difficult to reconcile with a purely case-based approach.

Focus prepositions such as *than* and *but* feature in Sections 4.12 to 4.14. Since focus prepositions are neither predicates nor agreement-related functional heads, pronouns following a focus preposition are only subject to the Default Case constraint.

Section 4.15 discusses the case of pronouns following focus markers such as *only*, and Section 4.16 takes a look at case variation in other constructions where the pronoun is in some way modified. The case variation found with modified pronouns in canonical argument positions indicates that the syntactic status of a modified pronoun differs from the syntactic status of a corresponding lone pronoun. The exact nature of this difference will be explored in Chapter 5.

4.1 Topicalised pronouns

4.1.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

When a noun phrase is topicalised, it raises to a clause-initial position. Like relativisation, this fronting of the noun phrase is not accompanied by an associated raising of the finite verb. From a semantic perspective, a topicalised constituent is a secondary focus, which is embedded in the presupposition of another focus (Williams 1997: 614f). In metalinguistic responses to sentences that already contain a topicalisation structure, a topicalised element may be elevated to primary focus (Williams 1997: 611f):[1]

(7) A: John would eat beans and corn, but **broccoli** he WOULDN'T EAT.
(broccoli = topicalised & secondary focus)

B: No, **CABBAGE** he wouldn't eat.
(cabbage = topicalised & primary focus)

While both subject and non-subject noun phrases can be semantically topicalised, the syntactic consequences of the operation are most evident when the topicalised phrase is the object of a verb or preposition.

Although Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 223f) and Householder (1987: 164) argue that topicalisation encourages the use of nominative pronoun forms, the case of lone topicalised pronouns generally corresponds to the case of lone pronouns in canonical argument positions (cf. Lasnik & Sobin 2000: 353). When the subject of a finite clause is topicalised, it obligatorily surfaces in the nominative case, no matter whether it functions as a secondary (8)-(9) or primary focus (10)-(11).

(8) So what about you? What did you eat?[2]
a. **I/We** ate BEANS.
b. * **Me/Us** ate BEANS.

(9) So what about Kim? What did she/he eat?
a. **She/he** ate SPAGHETTI.
b. * **Her/him** ate SPAGHETTI.

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[1] The examples in (7) are taken from Williams (1997: 612). Topicalised constituents are given in bold print, and the primary focus of the sentence is capitalised.

[2] Examples (8) and (9) are based on an example discussed in Williams (1997: 615).

(10) So Kim ate the beans.
  a. No, **I/WE** ate the beans.
  b. * No, **ME/US** ate the beans.

(11) So you ate the spaghetti?
  a. No, ☞ **HE/SHE/THEY** ate the spaghetti.[3]
  b. * No, ☞ **HIM/HER/THEM** ate the spaghetti.

Topicalised objects of verbs or stranded prepositions tend to appear in their objective case forms (12)-(13), as do topicalised subjects of embedded nonfinite clauses and small clauses (14).[4]

(12) a. **Her** I like.
  b. **Them** I would never (ask anyone else to) taste.
  (Lasnik & Sobin 2000: 353)

(13) a. **Me** they never listen to.
  b. **Him** they never talk about.

(14) a. **Him** I consider [to be a genius].
  b. **Me** they would never consider [suitable].

A closer look at the data collected by Householder (1987: 181) and Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 224f, 264), reveals only one clear instance of a lone topicalised nominative pronoun that functions as the object of a verb (15).

(15) But **shee**, I can hooke to me (Shakespeare, *The winter's tale*: II.iii.6)
  [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 264]

Virtually all of the remaining examples of unexpected nominatives in topicalised position involve 3sg pronouns modified by a relative clause.

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[3] Note that 3rd person pronouns can only occur as a primary focus if they are used deictically and are accompanied by a pointing gesture.

[4] Since the case preferences illustrated in (12)-(14) appear to hold both when the pronoun bears secondary focus (i) and when it bears primary focus (ii), I will not mark the primary focus in any of the remaining examples in this section.

(i) **Her** I LIKE. (but he really gets on my nerves)
(ii) ☞ **HER** I like. (not him)

In some of the sentences, the nominative form of the topicalised pronoun could be argued to have been influenced by the function of the relativised constituent in the clause (16)-(17).

(16) Example where the topicalised pronoun functions as the object of a verb, and is modified by a relative clause where the relativised constituent is the subject of a finite verb

[**She**, who had been the bane of his life] ... he treated with the respect a good son might offer a kind mother
(Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, London 1867 [1852]: 378) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225]

(17) Example where the topicalised pronoun functions as the subject of a small clause, and is modified by a relative clause where the relativised constituent is the subject of a finite verb

[**He**, who had always inspired in herself a respect which almost overcame her affection], she now saw the object of open pleasantry
(Jane Austen, *Pride and prejudice*, London 1894 [1813]: 475)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

However, nominative 3sg forms also occur when the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb or preposition (18).

(18) Examples where the topicalised pronoun functions as the object of a verb, and is followed by a relative clause where the relativised constituent is the object of a verb or preposition

a. [**She** whom thine eie shall like], thy heart shall haue (Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*: 594) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

b. [**She** in whom I might have inspired a dearer love], I had taught to be my sister (Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, London (Macmillan) 1897 [1849-50]: 775) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224f]

The use of *she* in (18) is reminiscent of the preference for the nominative *wh*-form *whoever* in topicalised free relatives where both the *wh*-pronoun and the free relative itself function as the object of a verb (19).[5]

[5] See Section 3.7.1 for a more detailed discussion.

(19) Example of a topicalised free relative where both the *wh*-pronoun and the relative itself function as the object of a verb

And generally, [**who euer** the King fauours], The Cardinall instantly will finde imployment (Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*: II. i. 47)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 58]

4.1.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case and Def-Case

The surface word order created by the topicalisation of verbal and prepositional objects in English matrix clauses suggests that topicalised pronouns occupy a position higher than [Spec, TP]. As discussed in Section 4.1.1, topicalised elements normally bear secondary focus (20), but can be elevated to primary focus in metalinguistic responses to sentences that already contain a topicalisation structure (21).

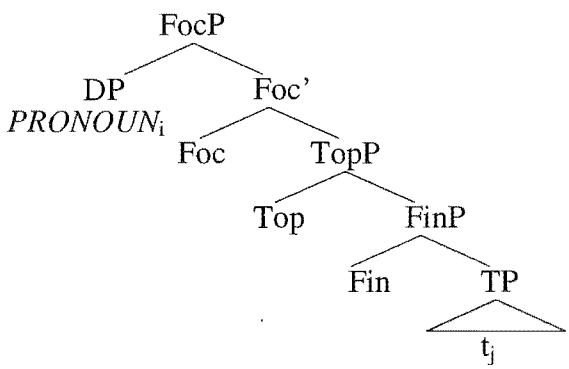
(20) So what about Kimberley? How do you get on with her?
Her I LIKE. (**her** = topicalised & secondary focus)

(21) So your problem with Kimberley and Kevin is really Kimberley; him you like.
No, **HER** I like. (**HER** = topicalised & primary focus)

Both Williams (1997: 611f) and Rizzi (1997: 285ff) argue that the syntactic status of the topicalised element in (20) differs from that in (21).

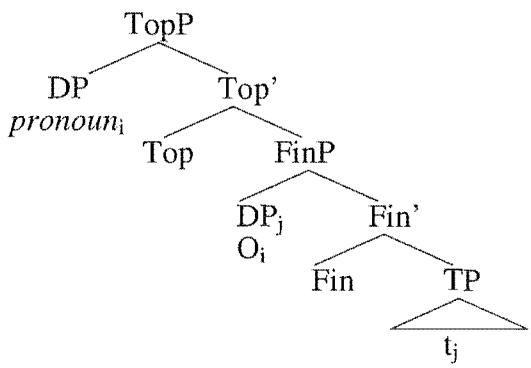
In the approach proposed by Rizzi (1997: 287), a topicalised pronoun with primary focus (21) occupies the specifier of a Focus Phrase (FocP) in the C-system and directly binds a phrasal trace in argument position (22).

(22) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status and surface position of a topicalised pronoun with primary focus in the approach advocated by Rizzi (1997: 287, 297)



A topicalised pronoun with secondary focus (20), on the other hand, occupies the specifier of a Topic Phrase (TopP) in the C-system, and is assumed to be unable to bind the empty argument position directly (23). Instead, the argument trace is bound by an empty anaphoric operator in the specifier of a lower functional projection associated with finiteness (FinP). The interpretive relation between the empty anaphoric operator and the phrase in [Spec, TopP] is assumed to be similar to the relation between a relative pronoun and its antecedent (Rizzi 1997: 292f; cf. also Section 3.8.3).[6]

(23) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status and surface position of a topicalised pronoun with secondary focus in the approach advocated by Rizzi (1997: 286, 314)



While the analysis in (23) may seem fairly plausible for topicalised objects of verbs and prepositions, it appears problematic for sentences where the subject is topicalised. As mentioned in Section 3.8.1, restrictive subject relatives are generally introduced by a *wh*-pronoun or the complementizer *that* (24), even though both the relative pronoun and the overt complementizer are preferentially omitted when the relativised constituent is the object of a verb or stranded preposition (25).

(24) a. You'll have to talk to the people [**who** had beans].
b. You'll have to talk to the people [that had beans].
c. * You'll have to talk to the people [Ø had beans].

[6] The interpretive relation between the null operator and its antecedent is represented by coindexation in the tree diagram.

(25) a. You are talking about the man [Ø I love].
b. They remind him of the horrible men [Ø he used to go about with].

If we assume that the relative clauses lacking an overt *wh*-pronoun are introduced by an empty operator binding an argument trace, the data in (24) and (25) suggest that Present-Day English readily permits a null operator in the C-system to bind object traces, but that the binding of a subject trace by a null operator is possible only if the operator in some way interacts with *that* (24b). Since the complementizer *that* is clearly not involved in the licensing of topicalised subjects with secondary focus, we will have to argue that the syntactic and interpretive relationship between the topicalised pronoun and the null operator in (23) is sufficiently strong to license the binding of a subject trace.

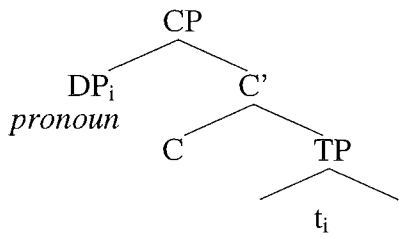
This raises the question whether we really have enough syntactic evidence to assume that a separate null operator is present in sentences where the topicalised element bears secondary focus in Present-Day English.[7] As discussed in Section 4.1.1, the case preferences for topicalised pronouns with secondary focus would appear to be identical to the case preferences for topicalised pronouns with primary focus: topicalised subjects obligatorily surface in the nominative case, and topicalised objects of verbs and stranded prepositions tend to surface in the objective case, unless the topicalised pronoun is modified by a relative clause. This suggests that topicalised pronouns have a case status very similar to that of *wh*-pronouns in embedded questions and relative clauses. I will therefore assume that all topicalised pronouns appear in [Spec, CP] at Spell-Out and directly bind a phrase in argument position (26).[8]

---

[7] Rizzi (1997: 329 n.11, 331f n.26) notes that there appear to be subtle differences in subjacency and *that*-trace effects between primary and secondary focus topicalisations, but the constructions involved seem rather complex and the differences difficult to judge.

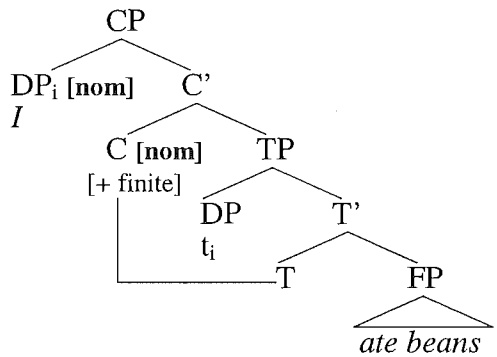
[8] As Riemsdijk (1997: 9 n.3) point out, topicalisation is marginal in embedded clauses, but when topicalisation does occur in an embedded clause, the topicalised constituent always follows the complementizer *that* (cf. also Potsdam 1998: 325, 350f n.7-8). If we assume that topicalisation involves movement to the specifier of a C-related head, then the word order in embedded clauses with topicalisation could be seen as evidence for the existence of more than one functional head in the C-system (cf. Rizzi 1997). Topicalised phrases could then be argued to occupy the lowest specifier position in the C-system, with the higher specifier position reserved for *wh*-phrases, which typically precede the complementizer *that* in varieties of English that allow the cooccurrence of an overt *wh*-pronoun and complementizer (cf. Browning (1996: 252) and Rizzi (1997: 308) for analyses along these lines). However, since the presence of additional empty positions in the C-system has no bearing on the predictions of the three case constraints proposed here, I will continue to show only a single C-related functional layer in my tree diagrams unless there is clear overt evidence for an additional projection.

(26) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status and surface position of a topicalised pronoun in a matrix clause (cf. Riemsdijk 1997: 9 n.3; Demirdache 1997: 224)



As discussed in Chapter 3, finite C is only able to check nominative Pos-Case on a pronoun in [Spec, CP] if T has raised to C, or if there is surface adjacency between C and T. While topicalisation never triggers T-to-C raising in English, C and T are adjacent at Spell-Out when the topicalised constituent is the subject of the matrix clause (27).

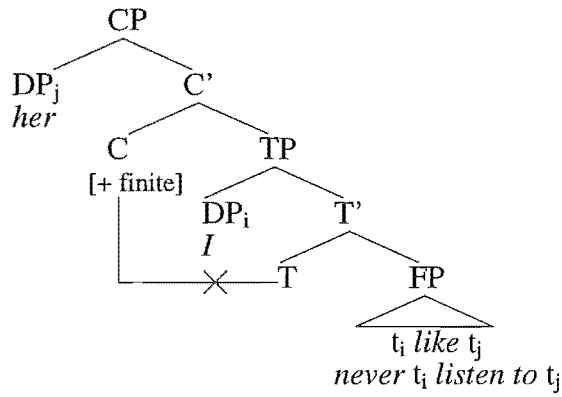
(27) Tree diagram which illustrates nominative Pos-Case checking between finite C and the topicalised subject of a finite clause



The use of the nominative in this context is further reinforced by the Arg-Case constraint, which requires a topicalised subject to surface in the nominative form because it is the highest argument of a predicate. The case constraints thus correctly predict that the topicalised subject of a matrix clause should always appear in the nominative case (cf. (8)-(11)).

When the topicalised pronoun is the object of a verb or stranded preposition, the subject of the clause will intervene between C and T at Spell-Out, and thus prevent C from acquiring the ability to check nominative Pos-Case (28).

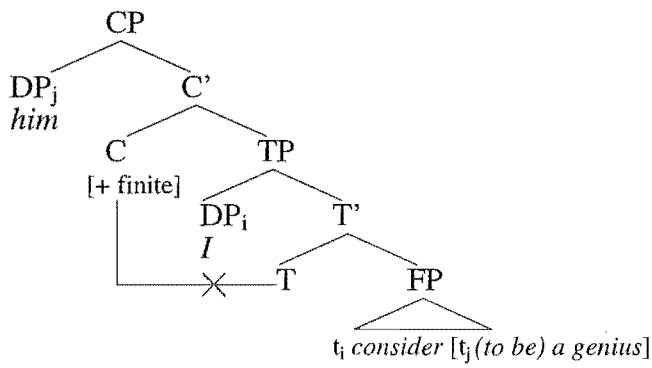
(28) Tree diagram which illustrates why there is no Pos-Case checking between finite C and a topicalised pronoun that functions as the object of a verb or stranded preposition



The case status of topicalised objects of verbs or prepositions thus resembles the case status of object *wh*-pronouns in embedded questions: since they are arguments of a predicate but do not occupy a surface position covered by Pos-Case, their surface form will be affected by Arg-Case and Def-Case requirements, but not by Pos-Case.

The same applies to topicalised pronouns that function as the subject of an embedded nonfinite clause or small clause (29).

(29) Tree diagram which illustrates why there is no Pos-Case checking between finite C and a topicalised pronoun that functions as the subject of an embedded clause



While Def-Case calls for objective case forms in all positions not covered by Pos-Case, the Arg-Case constraint predicts that topicalised pronouns and *wh*-pronouns should surface in their objective form only if they function as the object of a verb or preposition. Subjects of embedded clauses are linked to nominative Arg-Case, because they function as the highest argument of a predicate.

The case constraints proposed here would thus lead us to expect case differences between topicalised objects and topicalised subjects of embedded clauses: topicalised objects of verbs and prepositions should always appear in the objective case, while topicalised subjects of embedded clauses should be able to surface either in the objective or the nominative case. This prediction does not seem to be confirmed by the case trends discussed in Section 4.1.1: lone topicalised pronouns preferentially surface in the objective form even when they function as the subject of an embedded clause (30), while topicalised pronouns modified by a relative clause may appear in the nominative even when they function as the object of a verb or preposition (31).

(30) a. **Him** I consider [to be a genius].
b. **Me** they would never consider [suitable].

(31) a. [**She**, who had been the bane of his life] ... he treated with the respect a good son might offer a kind mother
(Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, London 1867 [1852]: 378)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225]

b. [**She** whom thine eie shall like], thy heart shall haue (Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*: 594) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

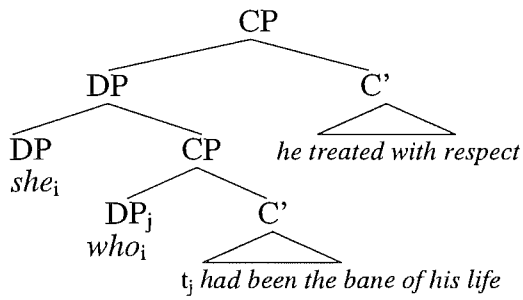
In Chapter 3, I argued that the ready occurrence of *who* in positions where both Arg-Case and Def-Case call for the objective form *whom*, points to a trend towards invariant *who*. Analogously, the preference for objective personal pronoun forms sentences like (30) could be seen as evidence for a trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them*. We would expect the influence of such a trend to be particularly noticeable in positions not covered by Pos-Case, because Arg-Case and Def-Case are weaker in Present-Day English (cf. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3), and Def-Case also calls for objective forms.

While the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them*, can help us account for the selection of objective personal pronoun forms in sentences like (30), we will have to find some other explanation for the occurrence of nominative personal pronoun forms in topicalised constituents where the pronoun is modified by a relative clause (31).

In Section 3.8.3, I argued that the stronger tendency towards *whom* in headed relatives than in embedded questions could be due to influence from the Arg-Case assigned to the antecedent of the *wh*-pronoun in the matrix clause. If we assume

that the interpretive relationship between the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent leads to case agreement, then we might also expect the antecedent to be influenced by the Arg-Case assigned to the *wh*-pronoun in the relative clause. Thus, the use of the nominative *she* in sentences like (31a) could be argued to arise from case agreement with the *wh*-pronoun, which receives nominative Arg-Case, because it functions as the subject of the relative clause (32).[9]

(32) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic and interpretive relationship between a *wh*-pronoun introducing a nonrestrictive relative clause and its antecedent[10]



While relative-internal Arg-Case requirements could be seen to motivate the selection of the nominative *she* in sentences like (31a), no purely case-based approach can predict the occurrence of the nominative *she* in (31b), where both the personal pronoun and the relative pronoun function as the object of a verb, or in (33), where the topicalised pronoun appears without a modifying relative clause.

(33) But **shee**, I can hooke to me (Shakespeare, *The winter's tale*: II.iii.6)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 264]

In Section 3.7.3, I proposed that the preference for *whoever* in topicalised free relatives of the type illustrated in (34) is due to the tendency towards invariant *who(ever)* in all *wh*-contexts.

(34) And generally, [**who euer** the King fauours], The Cardinall instantly will finde imployment (Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*: II. i. 47)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 58]

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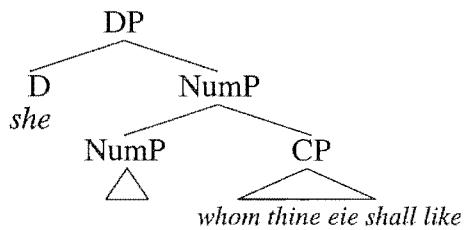
[9] The interpretive relationship between the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent is represented by coindexation in the tree diagram.

[10] For a more detailed discussion of the syntactic status of pronouns modified by a relative clause see Section 4.16.8.

However, if we want to argue that the emerging invariant forms for personal pronouns are the objective forms *me, him, her, us, them*, the use of *she* in (31b) and (33) cannot be due to influence from the trend towards invariant pronoun forms.

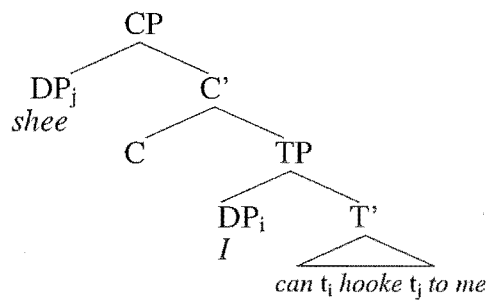
As we will see in Section 4.16, 3sg pronouns modified by a restrictive relative clause readily surface in the nominative forms *he* and *she*, even when they are not topicalised. It thus seems that the mere presence of a relative clause has a bearing on the case form of a pronoun. In Section 4.16, I will propose that the use of *he* and *she* with a restrictive relative is related to the position of the pronoun within the relative construction: a pronoun followed by a restrictive relative will always asymmetrically c-command the relative CP (35).

(35) Tree diagram illustrating the internal structure of a DP headed by a pronoun modified by a restrictive relative clause



Similarly, a lone topicalised pronoun will always asymmetrically c-command the remainder of the clause (36).

(36) Tree diagram illustrating the asymmetric c-command relationship between a topicalised pronoun and the remainder of the clause



As mentioned in Section 3.9, the nominative *wh*-form *who* is particularly likely to occur in positions where the *wh*-pronoun asymmetrically c-commands the rest of the phrase it appears in. The ready use of the 3sg nominatives *he* and *she* before a restrictive relative, and the marginal occurrence of lone 3sg nominatives in

topicalisation (cf. (33)), could thus be seen as evidence that *he* and *she* are similarly favoured in asymmetrically c-commanding positions.

4.2 Left-dislocated pronouns

4.2.1 Case trend reported in existing studies

As Erdmann (1978: 69) points out, left-dislocation of lone pronouns most commonly involves a 1sg pronoun coreferent with the subject of the clause (37).

(37) Examples of left-dislocation involving a 1sg pronoun[11]

a. '**Me**, I have never liked Prime Ministers.' (Evelyn Waugh, *Vile bodies*, (Penguin Books) 1964 [1930]: 40) [Erdmann 1978: 69]

b. **Me**, I usually end up giving them their stupid incompletes. (X., e-mail message, 15-12-1986) [Prince 1998: 288]

Non-1sg pronouns rarely occur in left-dislocated position by themselves, but when they do, they generally surface in their objective forms, just like 1sg pronouns, no matter whether they are coreferent with the subject of the clause (38a-c), or the object of a verb (38d).[12]

(38) Examples of left-dislocated non-1sg pronouns

a. **Him**, he's crazy. (Rodman 1997 [1974]: 53 n.8)
b. **Us**, we'll go together. (Ross 1986 [1967]: 259)
c. **Them**, they can't stand each other. (Ross 1986 [1967]: 259)
d. **Him**, I can't stand him. (Potsdam 1998: 302)

Both Householder (1987: 164) and Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 223f) suggest that left-dislocated pronouns coreferent with the object of a verb or preposition may surface either in the nominative or objective case, but only one of their examples involves a lone left-dislocated pronoun (39).

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[11] See Householder (1987: 181) for further examples.
[12] See Ross (1986 [1967]: 259), and Potsdam (1998: 302 n.13).

(39) Example of a left-dislocated nominative pronoun coreferent with the object of a preposition

She, I've never spoken to her. (George Higgins, *A city on a hill*, New York (Carrol & Graf) 1985 [1975]: 251) [Householder 1987: 181]

While lone nominatives are rather exceptional in left-dislocated position, left-dislocated non-1sg pronouns quite readily surface in their nominative form if they are modified by a relative clause or form part of a coordinate:

Left-dislocated non-1sg pronouns modified by a relative clause frequently appear in their nominative form (40)-(42), especially when the relative clause modifying the pronoun is a subject relative (40)-(41).[13]

(40) Examples of left-dislocated pronouns that are modified by a relative clause and coreferent with the subject of the main clause

[**Thou**, who didst subdue Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst pause to feel
The wrath of thy wrongs, or reap the due Of hoarded vengeance] ...
[**thou** who with thy frown Annihilated senates] ... thou didst lie down
(Byron, *Sulla*: Ch. H. IV. 83) [Jespersen 1934 [1924]: 27]

(41) Example of a left-dislocated pronouns modified by a relative clause and coreferent with the subject of a small clause

[**He** that is able to receiue it], let him receiue it (*The authorized version of the Bible*, 1611 (Facsimile ed., Oxford 1833): Matthew 19.12)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

[13] Note that this trend applies to pronouns modified by restrictive relatives as well as pronouns modified by nonrestrictive relatives.

(42) Examples of left-dislocated pronouns that are modified by a relative clause and coreferent with the object of a verb or preposition

a. [**ye** that be soo wel borne a man ...], there is no lady in the world to good for yow
(Thomas Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*, ed. O. Sommer, London 1889: 150)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

b. [**Hee** that rewards me], heauen reward him
(Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 1*: V.iv.167)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

c. But [**we** indeed who call things good and fair], The evil is upon us while we speak
(Elizabeth Barret Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, Tauchnitz 1856: 42)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

As (40)-(42) illustrate, the case and grammatical function of the intrusive pronoun has little bearing on the surface form of a left-dislocated pronoun modified by a relative clause.[14]

The case form of pronouns in left-dislocated coordinates would appear to be equally unaffected by the form and function of the coreferent intrusive pronoun. Thus, in (43) both conjuncts of the left-dislocated coordinate surface in the objective case, even though the coordinate is coreferent with the nominative subject *we*; and in (44), the pronoun in the initial conjunct of the coordinate appears in the nominative case, even though the coordinate is coreferent with the object *them*.

(43) Example of left-dislocated coordinated pronouns that appear in a coordinate coreferent with the subject of a finite clause

[**me** and **her**], we just never got on together (Harris 1981: 19)

(44) Example of a left-dislocated pronoun that appears as the initial conjunct of a coreferent with the object of a verb or preposition

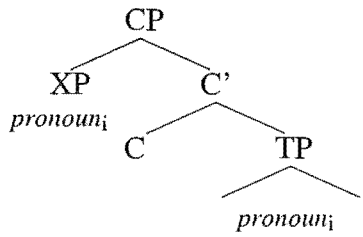
But yesternight my lord, [**she** and that fryer] I saw them at the prison
(Shakespeare, *Measure for measure*: V. 134)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

[14] See Demirdache (1997: 198) for a more detailed discussion of the status of the pronoun associated with the left-dislocated constituent in English.

4.2.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

Left-dislocated pronouns in English are generally assumed to be base-generated in the specifier of a functional head in the C-system (45).[15]

(45) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic position of left-dislocated pronouns



As discussed in Chapter 3 and Section 4.1.2, Pos-Case checking between C and a pronoun in [Spec, CP] is possible only if no overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out. Since C and T are separated by an overt subject in all English sentences involving left-dislocation, a left-dislocated pronoun will be unable to check Pos-Case, even if we assume that Pos-Case applies to both argument and non-argument noun phrases.[16]

Unlike topicalised DPs, left-dislocated constituents do not function as arguments of a predicate,[17] which means that a left-dislocated pronoun will be unaffected by any Arg-Case requirements. We might speculate that left-dislocated pronouns could receive an Arg-Case through agreement with a coreferent intrusive pronoun, but the data presented in Section 4.2.1 suggest that the semantic and

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[15] As Riemsdijk (1997: 4) points out, the kind of left-dislocation we find in English is commonly referred to as Hanging Topic Left Dislocation (HTLD). Kayne (1994: 78), Vat (1997: 82), and Demirdache (1997: 198) all propose that left-dislocated constituents in English HTLD are base-generated in the specifier of a functional head. Anagnostopoulou (1997: 167f), on the other hand, argues that the left-dislocated constituent in English HTLD is adjoined to CP, and suggests that this is why embedded HTLD is possible only in environments that permit CP recursion, namely when the CP is selected and governed by a bridge verb. However, like the topicalised phrase in an embedded topicalisation, the left-dislocated constituent in embedded HTLD always follows the complementizer *that*, which suggests that left-dislocated constituents do not adjoin to CP. As discussed in footnote 8, the occurrence of topicalised or left-dislocated constituents after *that* points to the presence of at least one additional functional head in the C-system, which takes a topicalised or left-dislocated phrase as its specifier (cf. Rizzi 1997).
Since the presence of additional empty positions in the C-system has no bearing on the predictions of the three case constraints proposed here, I will continue show only a single C-related functional layer in my tree diagrams unless there is clear overt evidence for an additional projection.

[16] As mentioned in Section 2.3.2, footnote 64, I am assuming that Pos-Case only affects argument noun phrases in Present-Day English, although the argument status of a DP could conceivably be irrelevant for Pos-Case checking.

[17] See Riemsdijk (1997: 2-4) for supporting evidence.

syntactic relation between the intrusive pronoun and its left-dislocated antecedent are not strong enough to license case agreement.[18]

If we assume that Arg-Case agreement with the intrusive pronoun is not an option, left-dislocated lone pronouns will be subject only to the Def-Case constraint. Since the Def-Case constraint calls for objective pronoun forms in all contexts not covered by Pos-Case, the case-based approach adopted here correctly predicts that left-dislocated lone pronouns should always surface in their objective form.[19]

The ready occurrence of non-1sg nominatives when the left-dislocated pronoun is modified by a subject relative, points to possible influence from relative-internal Arg-Case. As discussed in Sections 3.8.3 and 4.1.2, the interpretive relationship between the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent may lead to Arg-Case agreement. As a result of this case agreement, the *wh*-pronoun may surface in the Arg-Case assigned to its antecedent, or the antecedent may surface in the Arg-Case assigned to the *wh*-pronoun (46).[20]

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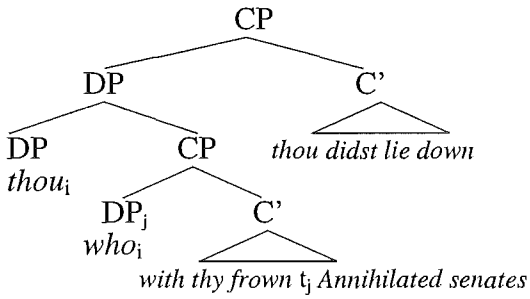
[18] As Riemsdijk (1997: 5) notes, 'case agreement is generally optional and often blocked in HTLD constructions'. Thus, a left-dislocated noun phrase in German tends to appear in the nominative case, even when the associated pronoun in the following clause is in the accusative (i).

(i) **Der** **Hans**, ich kenne **ihn** schon seit zwölf Jahren.
the.MASC.NOM Hans I know 3sgM.ACC already since twelve years
'Hans, I've known him for twelve years.' (Riemsdijk 1997: 5)

[19] Compare Ross' (1986 [1967]: 259 fn.19) suggestion that nominative case forms are blocked by the feature [+ objective] which is assigned to a left-dislocated NP as part of the Left Dislocation rule.

[20] The interpretive relationship between the *wh*-pronoun and its antecedent is represented by coindexation in the tree diagram.

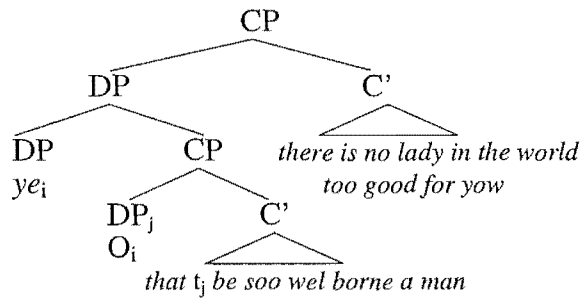
(46) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic and interpretive relationship between a *wh*-pronoun introducing a nonrestrictive relative clause and its antecedent[21]



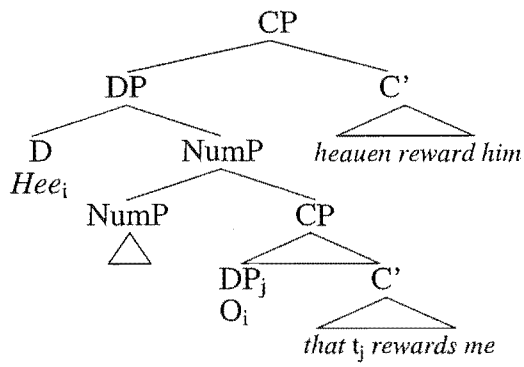
The data presented in (41)-(42) suggest that Arg-Case agreement is not restricted to overt *wh*-pronouns and their antecedents, but is also possible between empty *wh*-operators and their antecedents (47)-(48).

[21] For a more detailed discussion of the syntactic status of pronouns modified by a relative clause see Section 4.16.8.

(47) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic and interpretive relationship between a *wh*-pronoun introducing a nonrestrictive relative clause and its antecedent[22]



(48) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic and interpretive relationship between a *wh*-operator introducing a restrictive relative clause and its antecedent



While case agreement between the *wh*-pronoun (or operator) and its antecedent could account for the use of the nominative when a left-dislocated pronoun is modified by a subject relative, the occurrence of nominative pronoun forms in left-dislocated coordinates such as (49) defies any purely case-based analysis.

(49) But yesternight my lord, [she and that fryer] I saw them at the prison
(Shakespeare, *Measure for measure*: V. 134)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

If we assume that coordinates are transparent to outside case influences, we will predict that the conjuncts of a left-dislocated coordinate should surface in the objective forms required by the Def-Case constraint, as in (50).

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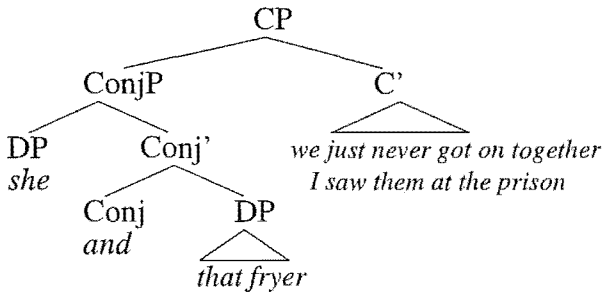
[22] For a more detailed discussion of the syntactic status of pronouns modified by a relative clause see Section 4.16.8.

(50) [**me** and **her**], we just never got on together (Harris 1981: 19)

If we treat coordinates as opaque to outside case influences, the initial conjunct will only be predicted to surface in the nominative case if the coordinating conjunction *and* is able to assign nominative Arg-Case or Pos-Case. This seems unlikely, because *and* behaves neither like a lexical predicate nor like an agreement-related functional head in Present-Day English. What is more, the assumption that initial conjuncts receive nominative case from the conjunction, would rule out coordinates like (50), where the initial conjunct takes the objective form *me*.

This suggests that the selection of *she* in (49) is due to factors other than case. If we assume that coordinates are ConjPs headed by the conjunction (51), a pronoun occupying the initial conjunct of a coordinate will asymmetrically c-command the remainder of the ConjP.[23]

(51) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status of pronouns that appear in the initial and final conjunct of a left-dislocated coordinate



The use of *she* in the initial conjunct of a coordinate could thus be seen as further evidence *she* is favoured in asymmetrically c-commanding positions (cf. Section 4.1.2).

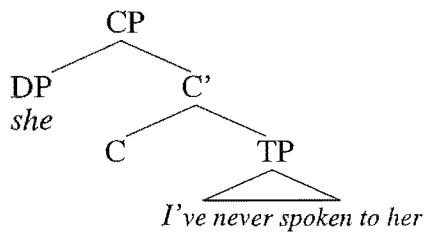
The assumption that 3sgF pronouns preferentially surface as *she* in asymmetrically c-commanding positions, would also allow us to account for the occurrence of *she* in (52).

(52) **She**, I've never spoken to her. (George Higgins, *A city on a hill*, New York (Carrol & Graf) 1985 [1975]: 251) [Householder 1987: 181]

[23] See Section 4.11 for a more detailed discussion of the structure and case properties of coordinates.

Since left-dislocated pronouns do not function as arguments of a predicate, a purely case-based approach would predict that the left-dislocated 3sgF pronoun in (52) will be influenced only by the Def-Case constraint, and should therefore surface in the objective form *her*. Even Arg-Case agreement with the coreferent pronoun in the following clause could not account for the use of the nominative *she*, because in (52) the left-dislocated pronoun is coreferent with the object of a preposition rather than the subject. However, if we assume that pronoun forms not only encode case, but also asymmetric c-command relationships, then the selection of *she* in (52) could be argued to arise from the fact that the left-dislocated pronoun asymmetrically c-commands the remainder of the clause (53).[24]

(53) Tree diagram illustrating the asymmetric c-command relationship between a left-dislocated pronoun and the remainder of the clause



4.3 Right-dislocated pronouns

4.3.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

According to Visser (1963: 56), the use of right-dislocated lone pronouns was particularly common in the 16th and 17th century, but can also be found in more recent texts (54).

[24] Compare the asymmetric c-command relationship between a topicalised pronoun and the remainder of the clause (Section 4.1.2).

(54) Examples of right-dislocated lone pronouns from 16th-19th century texts

a. I have stood up and defended you, **I**. (Ben Jonson, *Poetaster*, [1602]: III. i. 306) [Visser 1963: 56]

b. I hate all treachery, **I**! (Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*, (Everyman) 1749: II. 75) [Visser 1963: 56]

b. He was not going to be a snuffy schoolmaster, **he**. (George Eliot, *Mill on the Floss*, 1860: Vol. II, Ch.1, 191) [Visser 1963: 56]

c. Nay, we have no art to please our friends, **we**! (Ben Jonson, *Every man out of his humour*, [1599]: IV. v. 16) [Visser 1963: 56]

In all of the examples cited by Visser (1963: 56), the right-dislocated pronoun surfaces in the nominative case and is coreferent with the subject of the preceding clause. Indeed, the ungrammaticality of sentences like (55) and (56) suggests that right-dislocated lone pronouns must generally be coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause.[25]

[25] As Diane Massam (p.c.) points out, we need to be circumspect when we compare the historical data in (54) with the present-day grammaticality judgments given in (55)-(56). In Present-Day English, the sentences in (54) seem rather archaic, but they are still noticeably less degraded than the examples in (55)-(56). Since it is impossible for us to obtain grammaticality judgments form the 16th-19th century authors cited by Visser, we can never be certain whether they would have considered the sentences in (55)-(56) to be ungrammatical or not. However, the apparent absence of examples such as (55)-(56) from earlier texts and grammars, would seem to suggest that right-dislocated pronouns were preferentially coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause in earlier varieties of Modern English.

(55) Right-dislocated lone pronouns may not be coreferent with the subject of an embedded non-finite clause (a-d) or small clause (e-f)

a. * They expected me to win, **I**.

b. * They expected me to win, **me**.[26]

c. * Kevin arranged for her to win, **she**.

d. * Kevin arranged for her to win, **her**.

e. * The police let him go yesterday, **he**.

f. * The police let him go yesterday, **him**.[27]

(56) Right-dislocated lone pronouns may not be coreferent with a possessive pronoun (a-b), or with the object of a verb (c-d) or preposition (e-f)

a. * Sarah's always been on our side, **we**.

b. * Sarah's always been on our side, **us**.

c. * Alicia took me off the list yesterday, **I**.

d. * Alicia took me off the list yesterday, **me**.

e. * We talked about him yesterday, **he**.

f. * We talked about him yesterday, **him**.

---

[26] Note the difference between (55b), where the pronoun appears in right-dislocated position, and (i), where the pronoun forms a nonsentential constituent.

(i) They expected me to win. Me!

Unlike the right-dislocated pronouns in (54)-(57), the independent pronoun in (i) is strongly stressed, carries a noticeable complex pitch-movement and is preceded by a clear pause. The contrast in grammaticality between (55b) and (i) suggests that right-dislocated lone pronouns must be coreferent with the subject of a finite (matrix) clause, whereas independent pronouns need not be.

[27] (55e-f) is based on an example offered by Ross (1986 [1967]: 258).

Ross (1986 [1967]: 258) argues that in Present-Day English, the right-dislocation of lone pronouns is impossible even when the pronoun is coreferent with the subject of the preceding matrix clause. However, while I would agree that Present-Day English speakers are unlikely to use nominative pronoun forms in right-dislocation (cf. (54)), the right-dislocated objective forms in (57) strike me as quite acceptable.

(57) a. I like beer, **me**. (Ross 1986 [1967]: 258)[28]
b. He doesn't drink beer, **him**.
c. She wouldn't touch a broom, **her**.

As Ross (1986 [1967]: 258f) points out, right-dislocated pronouns readily surface in either their nominative or objective forms when they form part of a coordinate (58).

(58) a. We'll do it together, [**you** and **I**].
b. We'll do it together, [**you** and **me**].
c. They can't stand each other, [**he** and **she**].
d. They can't stand each other, [**him** and **her**].
(Ross 1986 [1967]: 259)

Unlike right-dislocated lone pronouns, right-dislocated coordinates containing pronominal conjuncts may be coreferent with constituents other than the subject of the matrix clause. Although pronouns are most likely to surface in their objective forms when the coordinate is coreferent with a pronoun in the objective case (59), the example in (60) suggests that nominative pronoun forms are possible in this context.[29]

(59) a. The police are bound to let <u>them</u> go, [**him** and Andrea].
b. Alicia took <u>us</u> off the list yesterday, [**you** and **me**].

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[28] Although Ross (1986 [1967]: 258) generally considers the right-dislocation of lone pronouns to be ungrammatical, his annotations suggest that he viewed the use of the objective form *me* in right-dislocation as slightly more acceptable than the use of the nominative *I* in the same context (i)-(ii).

(i) * I like beer, **I**.
(ii) *? I like beer, **me**.

[29] In the following examples, the antecedent of the right-dislocated pronouns has been underlined.

(60) We have'em to the house for dinner ... [**they** and their wives]
(Ring Lardner, *The best short stories of Ring Lardner*, New York (Charles Scribner's Sons) 1975 [1915-28]: 337) [Householder 1987: 181]

As can be seen from (61) and (62), right-dislocated pronouns modified by a noun phrase or a relative clause are also able to appear with coreferents other than the subject of the matrix clause, and again need not agree with their coreferent in case.[30]

(61) Examples of right-dislocated pronouns modified by a noun phrase

a. pray eek for us, [**we** sinful folk unstable]
(Chaucer, Skeat's six-volume edition, *Canterbury tales*: Group B, 1877)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225]

b. I speke of us, [**we** mendiants], [**we** freres]
(Chaucer, Skeat's six-volume edition, *Canterbury tales*: Group D, 1912)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225]

(62) Example of a right-dislocated pronoun modified by a relative clause

the auxiliaries which then stood Upon our side, [**us** who were strong in love]!
(William Wordsworth, *The prelude*: 11.107)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225)

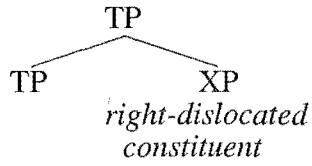
4.3.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

There is no clear agreement in the literature on the exact syntactic relation between a right-dislocated constituent and the associated clause.

In a syntactic approach that permits right-adjunction, right-dislocated constituents are best treated as adjuncts to a high-level verbal projection, presumably TP (63).

[30] See Sections 4.16.6 and 4.16.8 for further discussion of pronouns modified by a noun phrase and relative clause, respectively.

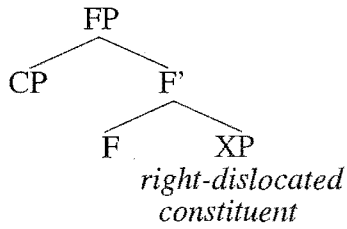
(63) Tree diagram illustrating the relation between the right-dislocated constituent and the preceding clause in an adjunction analysis of right-dislocation



In a strictly antisymmetric approach to syntactic structure, on the other hand, a right-dislocated constituent will have to occupy the specifier or complement position of a functional head (cf. Kayne 1994).

Kayne (1994: 78) suggests that right-dislocation involves an abstract functional head (F in the diagram), which takes the right-dislocated constituent as its complement and the preceding clause as its specifier (64).

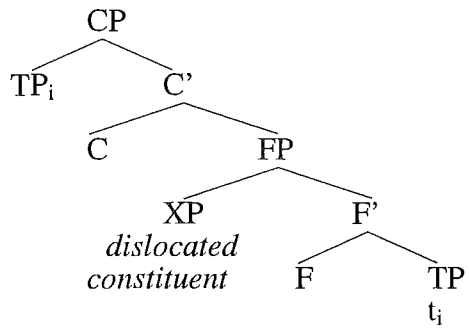
(64) Tree diagram illustrating the relation between the right-dislocated constituent and the preceding clause in the analysis proposed by Kayne (1994: 78)



Alternatively, right-dislocated constituents could be argued to be base-generated in the specifier of a functional projection in the C-system, just like left-dislocated constituents. In such an approach, the difference in surface order between right-dislocation and left-dislocation constructions would be due to the presence versus absence of TP-raising. While the TP remains in-situ in left-dislocation, it raises past the dislocated constituent in right-dislocation structures (65).[31]

[31] As discussed in footnotes 8 and 15, the word order found in embedded clauses provides independent evidence that topicalised and left-dislocated constituents do not occupy the highest specifier position in the C-system (cf. also Rizzi 1997).

(65) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of a right-dislocated constituent in a TP-movement analysis[32]



Although the relationship between the right-dislocated constituent and the clause differs quite markedly in (63), (64), and (65), the structural differences between the analyses have little bearing on the predictions of my three case constraints. Since the right-dislocated constituent does not function as an argument of a predicate in the clause, we would predict that the only external case-influence on the right-dislocated constituent should come from the Def-Case constraint. However, a right-dislocated pronoun could also be subject to case influences internal to the right-dislocated constituent, if we assume that right-dislocated constituents have a more complex internal structure than is apparent from their phonological form.

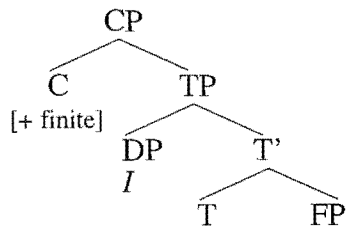
Kayne (1994: 78) suggests that right-dislocated constituents are best analysed as clauses reduced by the ellipsis of a verbal projection. As discussed in Sections 3.6.2 and 3.7.5, there is general agreement in current theory that the ellipsis of a constituent must be licensed by a higher functional head, either through government (cf. Lobeck 1995: 50ff), or through head-head agreement (cf. Merchant 2001: 60). If we follow Kayne (1994: 78) in assuming that right-dislocated pronouns occupy the subject position in a reduced clause, the ellipted constituent is most likely to be the verbal projection immediately dominated by TP, with the ellipsis licensed by T (66).

---

[32] Compare Kayne's (1994: 151 n.18) suggestion that sentences like (i) could be derived from (ii) through VP-preposing.

(i) He is real smart, John is.
(ii) John is [he is real smart].

(66) Tree diagram illustrating the immediate environment of a right-dislocated pronoun at Spell-Out, in the reduction analysis proposed by Kayne (1994: 78)



Since T must be present at Spell-Out to license the ellipsis of the following FP, the right-dislocated pronoun in [Spec, TP] will occupy a nominative Pos-Case position, no matter whether we assume that ellipsis involves PF-Deletion (cf. Merchant 2001) or the base-generation of empty categories (cf. Chao 1987; Lobeck 1995).

As discussed in Section 2.2.2, an argument DP is able to check Pos-Case if it appears in the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out, and its surface position differs from its θ-position.

If we treat ellipsis constructions as the result of PF-deletion (cf. Merchant 2001), the pronoun will have been base-generated within a lower verbal projection (either *v*P or VP), where it would have received its θ-role. Its surface position in [Spec, TP] will thus be different from its θ-position.

If we follow Chao (1987) and Lobeck (1995) in assuming that ellipsis involves the base-generation of empty categories, a right-dislocated pronoun will have to be inserted directly into [Spec, TP], because the FP complement of T will lack internal structure in the overt syntax.[33] However, it could nevertheless be argued to receive its θ-role in a position other than [Spec, TP]. Given that θ-role assignment is generally assumed to take place at a semantic level of representation, we could argue that the θ-role of the subject DP is assigned to a reconstructed trace in [Spec, *v*P] or [Spec, VP].[34]

Both a PF-deletion analysis and a base-generation approach to ellipsis will thus predict that the pronoun in [Spec, TP] should be able to check nominative Pos-Case with T when the reduced clause is finite (67).

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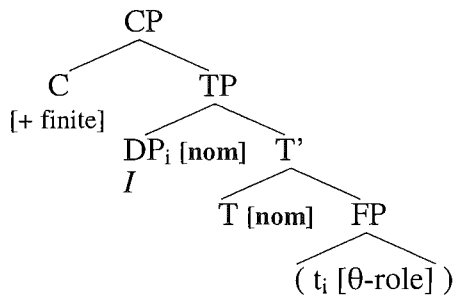
[33] For a more detailed discussion of the approach proposed by Chao (1987) and Lobeck (1995), see Sections 3.6.2 and 3.7.5.

[34] See Chao (1987: 73f) for further discussion of θ-roles and reconstruction.

(67) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and Pos-Case status of a right-dislocated pronoun in a reduced clause approach (cf. Kayne 1994: 78)[35]



Since the missing predicate in an ellipsis construction must be present at Semantic Form to ensure the correct interpretation of the overt constituents (cf. Chao 1987: 65-74; Lobeck 1995: 32-35; Chung et al. 1995), the selection of nominative pronoun forms will be further encouraged by the Arg-Case constraint, which stipulates that the highest argument of a predicate should surface in the nominative case.

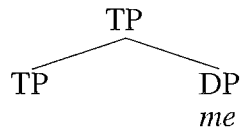
A reduction approach to right-dislocation would thus predict that right-dislocated pronouns should always surface in their nominative forms. While this appears to be exactly what we find in the 16th-19th century data cited by Visser (1963: 56) (cf. (54) in Section 4.3.1), the Present-Day preference for objective pronoun forms in right dislocation (cf. (57)) would seem to suggest that Present-Day speakers tend to assign a monoclausal analysis to right-dislocation constructions.

In a monoclausal analysis, any right-dislocated constituent overtly realised as a pronoun will be base-generated as a DP rather than a CP. As a result, the surface form of a right-dislocated pronoun will be determined entirely by the position and function of the right-dislocated constituent in the clause (68).

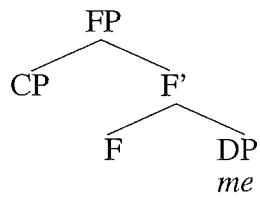
[35] The brackets around the trace of the subject DP indicate that the trace must be present at some level of representation (in order to receive the θ-role), but not necessarily at Spell-Out.

(68) Tree diagrams illustrating the syntactic status of a right-dislocated pronoun in a monoclausal analysis

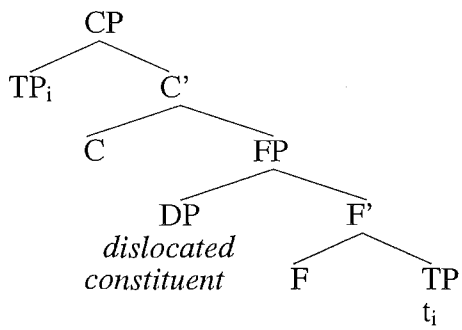
(a) if we assume that right-dislocated constituents are TP-adjuncts



(b) if we assume that right-dislocated constituents are base-generated as complements of an abstract functional head (cf. Kayne 1994: 78)



(c) if we assume that right-dislocated constituents are base-generated as specifiers of a functional head in the C-system



Since the right-dislocated pronoun in (68a-c) does not function as an argument of a predicate in the associated clause, it will fail to receive an Arg-Case, and will also be unable to enter into Pos-Case checking. This means that the surface form of the right-dislocated constituent in (68a-c) will be influenced only by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective pronoun forms. A monoclausal analysis of right-dislocation structures thus correctly predicts the present-day preference for objective pronoun forms in right-dislocated position (cf. (57)).

A monoclausal analysis also provides a straightforward account for the possible occurrence of coordinated and modified right-dislocated pronouns with a non-subject coreferent (69).

(69) Examples where the right-dislocated pronoun has a non-subject coreferent

a. pray eek for us, [**we** sinful folk unstable]
(Chaucer, Skeat's six-volume edition, *Canterbury tales*: Group B, 1877)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225]

b. the auxiliaries which then stood Upon our side, [**us** who were strong in love]! (William Wordsworth, *The prelude*: 11.107)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225]

If we assume that ellipsis/deletion of material is possible only under identity, then a reduced clause analysis will require right-dislocated pronouns to appear in the same syntactic configuration as their antecedents: A right-dislocated pronoun coreferent with the object of a verb or preposition would have to occupy a position within a verb phrase or prepositional phrase. A right-dislocated pronoun coreferent with a possessive would have to occupy a specifier position within a noun phrase. In order to account for the ellipsis of constituents before (and after) an object or possessive pronoun in a right-dislocated clause, we would have to extend our reduction analysis to include a wider range of ellipsis-types than originally suggested by Kayne (1994: 78).[36] What is more, even an extended reduction analysis would be unable to account for the case differences between the right-dislocated pronouns and their coreferents in (69).

In a monoclausal analysis, on the other hand, the surface position and case status of a dislocated constituent is not directly related to the position and case of the coreferent intrusive pronoun, which means that the case differences between the right-dislocated pronoun and its coreferent in (69) are much more easily accommodated.

While the majority of the data in Section 4.3.1 would seem to support a monoclausal analysis of right-dislocation, the occurrence of nominative pronoun forms in both conjuncts of right-dislocated coordinates coreferent with a subject (70), is more readily captured in a reduced clause approach.

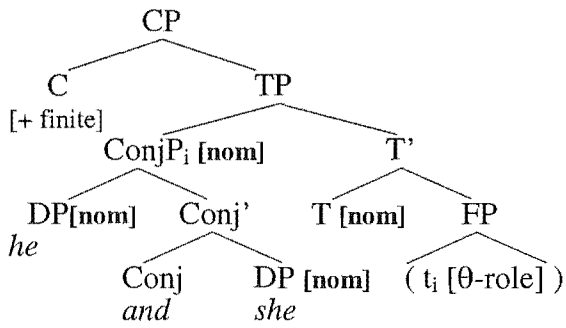
(70) They can't stand each other, [**he** and **she**]. (Ross 1986 [1967]: 259)

---

[36] See Section 4.4.2 for further discussion.

In a reduced clause approach, the right-dislocated coordinate will function as the subject of the ellipted predicate and occupy [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out. Provided we assume that coordinates are transparent to outside case influences, the conjuncts of a coordinate in this position will receive nominative Arg-Case and check nominative Pos-Case (71).

(71) Tree diagram illustrating the case predictions of a reduction analysis for pronouns that appear in a right-dislocated coordinate coreferent with the subject of a finite clause, provided we assume that coordinates are transparent to outside case influences.



The occurrence of nominatives in right-dislocated coordinates could thus be seen as evidence that coordinates are transparent to outside case influences for at least some speakers.[37]

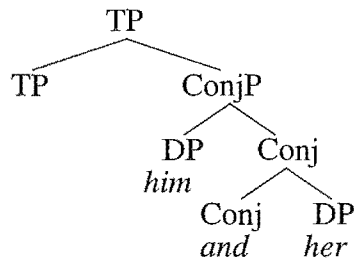
In order to account for the use of objective pronoun forms in the same context (72), we could assume either that the speakers concerned assign a monoclausal analysis to right-dislocation structures (73), or that they adopt a reduced clause approach, but treat coordinates as opaque to outside case influences (74).

(72) They can't stand each other, [**him** and **her**]. (Ross 1986 [1967]: 259)

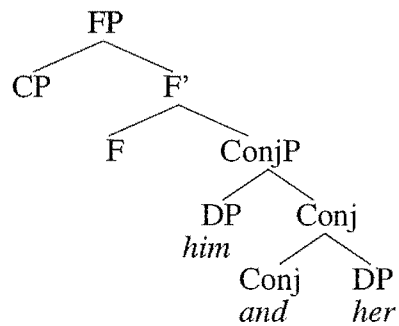
[37] As we will see in Section 4.11 and Chapter 7, the case transparency of coordinates is further supported by data from existing studies of pronoun case in coordinates, and by the results of my own survey.

(73) Tree diagrams illustrating the case predictions of a monoclausal analysis for pronouns that appear in a right-dislocated coordinate coreferent with the subject of a finite clause

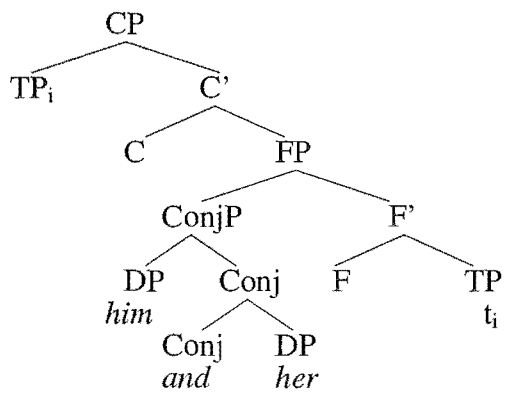
(a) if right-dislocated constituents are treated as TP-adjuncts



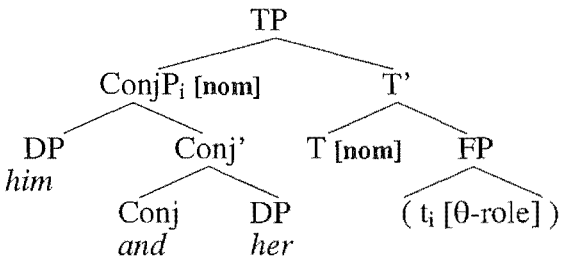
(b) if right-dislocated constituents are treated as complements of a functional head



(c) if right-dislocated constituents are treated as specifiers of a C-related head



(74) Tree diagram illustrating the case predictions of a reduction analysis for pronouns that appear in a right-dislocated coordinate coreferent with the subject of a finite clause, if we assume that coordinates are opaque to outside case influences.



The analyses in (73)-(74) all predict that pronominal conjuncts of a right-dislocated coordinate should surface in the objective form required by the Def-Case constraint, because they are unable to receive nominative Pos-Case or Arg-Case.

The availability of a reduced clause analysis for right-dislocated constituents would also allow us to provide a purely case-based account for the use of *they* in (75).

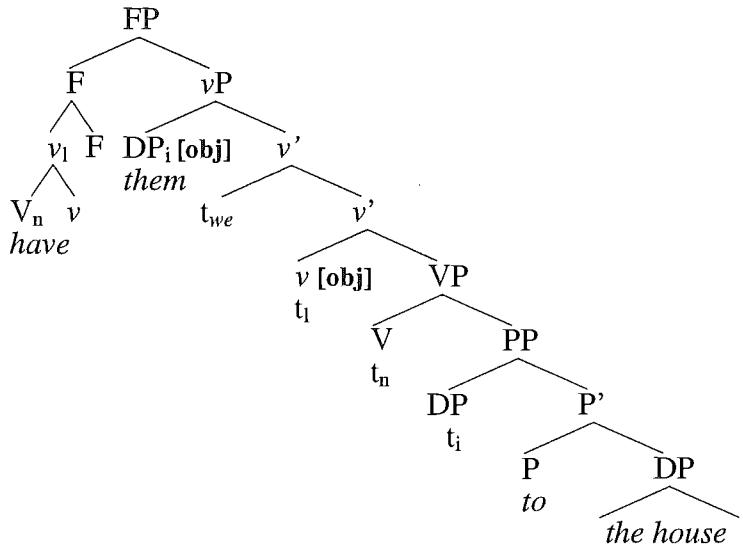
(75) We have'em to the house for dinner ... [**they** and their wives]
(Ring Lardner, *The best short stories of Ring Lardner*, New York (Charles Scribner's Sons) 1975 [1915-28]: 337) [Householder 1987: 181]

In a reduced clause analysis, the right-dislocated coordinate in (75) will function as the highest argument of the preposition *to* in the small clause *they and their wives to the house*, and will therefore receive nominative Arg-Case.

As discussed in Section 2.2.2.2, the pronominal subject of an embedded non-finite clause usually raises to [Spec, *v*P] of the matrix verb, where it checks objective Pos-Case. Since the Pos-Case constraint is more influential than the Arg-Case constraint in Present-Day English (cf. Chapter 2), the nominative Arg-Case assigned within the non-finite clause will generally be overridden by the objective Pos-Case checked in [Spec, *v*P] of the matrix clause. The obligatory use of the objective 3pl form *(th)em* in (76), suggests that a lone pronoun functioning as the subject of an embedded small clause also raises to [Spec, *v*P] before Spell-Out (77).

(76) a. We have **(th)em** to the house for dinner.
b. * We have **they** to the house for dinner.

(77) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and Pos-Case properties of a lone pronoun functioning as the subject of an embedded small clause[38]



If movement out of the small clause was equally obligatory for coordinated pronouns as for lone pronouns, we would predict that objective Pos-Case will also override nominative Arg-Case in right-dislocated coordinates coreferent with the subject of an embedded small clause. However, if we assume that coordinated pronouns are able to remain within the small clause throughout the derivation,[39] the surface form of the coordinated pronoun in (75) will be influenced by Def-Case rather than Pos-Case. While the Def-Case constraint also calls for objective pronoun forms, it is weaker than the Pos-Case constraint in Present-Day English, and could therefore be overridden by nominative Arg-Case.[40]

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[38] t_{we} = trace of the subject of the matrix clause

[39] As discussed in Section 2.2.2.1, only weak pronouns must raise to [Spec, *v*P] to be licensed. Since coordinated pronouns are strong (cf. Chapter 5), they may remain in [Spec, VP] throughout the derivation. In Section 2.2.2.1, footnote 41, I noted that, when movement is optional, an argument remaining in its base position tends to receive a rhematic interpretation at Information Structure. Since pronouns are essentially topics, they will tend to raise out of their base-position before Spell-Out, even if they are strong. However, the (novel) coordination of two noun phrases could be argued to constitute new information, because it requires the creation of a new file card (cf. Heim (1982: Chapter 3) for a detailed discussion of file change semantics). This could explain why coordinated pronouns appear more likely to remain in their base position than lone strong pronouns (see Chapter 7 for further evidence supporting the postulation that coordinated pronouns do not necessarily raise out of their base position).

[40] The selection of *they* in the initial conjunct of the right-dislocated coordinate, could of course also be due to non-case influences. As mentioned in Section 4.2.2, the initial conjunct of a coordinate asymmetrically c-commands the final conjunct, provided we analyse coordinates as ConjPs headed by the conjunction (cf. Section 4.11 and Chapter 7). If we assume that pronoun case forms code asymmetric c-command as well as case, the use of *they* in initial conjuncts could be seen as evidence that *they* is favoured in asymmetrically c-commanding positions, just like the 3sgF nominative *she* and the *wh*-nominative form *who* (cf. Sections 3.9, 4.1.2, and 4.2.2).

The three case constraints can thus account for the distribution of pronoun case forms in all of the right-dislocated coordinates cited in Section 4.3.1, provided we assume that at least some speakers analyse right-dislocated constituents as reduced clauses.

The use of nominative pronoun forms in examples like (78), on the other hand, is difficult to account for in a purely case-based approach, no matter what syntactic analysis we assign to right-dislocation structures.

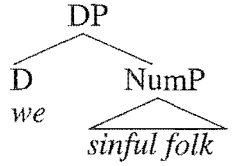
(78) pray eek for us, [we sinful folk unstable]
(Chaucer, Skeat's six-volume edition, *Canterbury tales*: Group B, 1877)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225]

A monoclausal analysis would predict that the right-dislocated pronoun should surface in the objective form required by the Def-Case constraint, because it does not function as the argument of a predicate.

A reduction analysis would predict that the right-dislocated pronoun should surface in its objective form, because it functions as the object of an ellipted preposition. As such, it will be influenced by the Arg-Case and Def-Case constraint, both of which call for objective forms in this context.

The selection of the nominative form *we* in (78) would thus appear to be due to factors other than case. As we will see in Section 4.16.6, 1pl pronouns followed by a noun phrase often surface in their nominative form, even when the whole construction appears as the object of a verb or preposition. This suggests that the presence of the noun phrase in some way influences the form of the preceding pronoun. In Section 4.16.6.2 and Chapter 7, I will argue that a phrase such as *we sinful folk* is best analysed as a DP headed by the 1pl pronoun (79).

(79) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic position of the 1pl pronoun in the phrase *we sinful folk*[41]



[41] I have left the internal structure of the NumP unspecified, because *sinful folk* could either be analysed as forming an AP complement of Num (cf. Abney 1987: 284; Longobardi 1994: 635ff), or it could be analysed as an adjunct to NP or NumP (cf. Cardinaletti 1994: 202-205). For a more detailed discussion of pronouns modified by a noun phrase, see Section 4.16.6.

As can be seen from (79), the pronoun asymmetrically c-commands the following noun phrase. The use of *we* in examples like (78) could thus be seen evidence that *we* is favoured in asymmetrically c-commanding positions, just like *who, he,* and *she* (cf. Sections 3.9, 4.2.1, and 4.2.2).

4.4 Independent pronouns

4.4.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

The data cited in existing studies suggest that independent pronouns consistently surface in their objective forms when they are interpreted as the object of a verb or preposition (80).

(80) Examples of objective independent pronouns in contexts where the pronoun is interpreted as the object of a verb or preposition

a. A: Who did the police question after the accident?
B: **Me. / Him. / Her. / Us. / Them.**

b. A: John gave a book to someone.
B: **Me. / Him. / Her. / Us. / Them.** (Barton 1990: 89)

Objective pronoun forms would appear to be favoured even when the independent pronoun is interpreted as the subject of a finite clause (81), but nominatives may occur in this context (82).[42]

[42] Cf. Erdmann (1978: 68), Quirk et al. (1985: 337), Householder (1987), Wales (1996: 99f).

(81) Examples of objective independent pronouns in contexts where the pronoun is interpreted as the subject of a finite clause

a. what would you have done? **Me**? Let her stew in her own juice
(John Galsworthy, *Caravan*, London 1925: 452)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 275]

b. I believe he wants us to make you a minister. - **Him**! He'd lose the war first (Arnold Bennett, *Lord Raingo*, London 1926: 20)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 275]

c. 'Isn't that a pretty girl!' Henry exclaimed...
'Who?' Willy looked round.
'The little Carter.'
'Oh **her**. Yes, of course.'
(P.H. Johnson, *Catherine Carter*, (Penguin Books) 1971 [1968]: 143)
[Erdmann 1978: 68]

d. Who's to stop it - **us**? (Doris Lessing. *The golden notebook*: 172)
[Erdmann 1978: 68]

(82) Examples illustrating the variation between nominative and objective pronoun forms in contexts where the independent pronoun is interpreted as the subject of a finite clause

a. 'who was in your room?' Withouth waiting for Lovell to answer, the other boys, each in turn, said, '**I**, sir,' or '**Me**, sir.'
(Horace A. Vachell, *The hill*, London 1905: 64)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 275]

b. A: Someone gave a book to John.
B: **I. / He. / She. / We. / They.**
Me. / Him. / Her. / Us. / Them. (Barton 1990: 90)

While the choice between nominative and objective pronoun forms is sometimes seen as a matter of style (cf. Kjellmer 1986: 445), one example cited in Erdmann (1978: 68) suggests the case form of an independent pronoun may in part depend on its ϕ-features. Thus the independent 3sgF pronouns in (83) surface in the nominative form *she*, whereas the 1sg pronouns take the objective form *me*.

(83) Example that points to a case difference between independent 1sg and 3sgF pronouns

e. **She**: Oh! **Me**: That's just what you are. **She**: You're just hard and mean.
Me: Who's mean? ...
(W. Sansom, *The cautious heart*, (Hogarth Press) 1969 [1958]: 137)
[Erdmann 1978: 68]

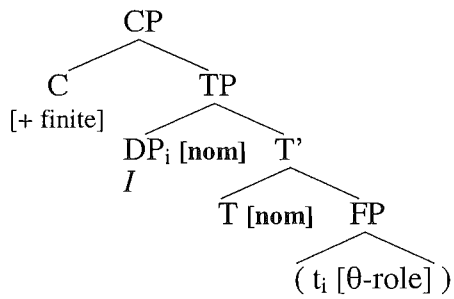
4.4.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

In the existing literature, independent pronouns are generally analysed either as nonsentential constituents or as remnants of extensive ellipsis.[43]

In an ellipsis approach, any independent pronoun interpreted as an argument of a predicate, will be influenced by the Arg-Case constraint, because the missing predicate is assumed to be present at least at a semantic level of representation (cf. Chao 1987: 65-74; Lobeck 1995: 32-35; Merchant 2001). When an independent pronoun is interpreted as a subject, it will be linked to nominative Arg-Case, while independent pronouns interpreted as the object of a verb or preposition will be linked to objective Arg-Case.

An independent pronoun interpreted as the subject of a finite clause will occupy [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out in an ellipsis approach, and will therefore have the same syntactic status as a right-dislocated pronoun in a reduction analysis (cf. Section 4.3.2). Since T will have to be present at Spell-Out in order to license the ellipsis of the missing verbal projection (cf. Lobeck 1995, Merchant 2001), the independent pronoun will be able to check nominative Pos-Case (84), no matter whether we assume that ellipsis involves PF-deletion (cf. Merchant 2001) or the base-generation of empty categories (cf. Chao 1987, Lobeck 1995).

(84) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and Pos-Case status of an independent subject pronoun in an ellipsis approach[44]



An independent pronoun functioning as the object of a verb, would most plausibly occupy [Spec, VP] in an ellipsis analysis. In Section 2.2.2.1, I argued

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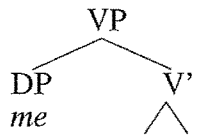
[43] See Barton (1990: 23-42) for an overview.

[44] The brackets around the trace of the subject DP indicate that the trace need not be present at Spell-Out, although it must be present at some level of representation in order to receive the θ-role assigned to the subject DP. As discussed in Sections 2.2.2 and 4.3.2, a DP that occupies the specifier of an agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out, will only be able to undergo Pos-Case checking if its surface position differs from its θ-position.

that lone object pronouns generally need to raise to [Spec, *v*P] before Spell-Out even when they are strong, because their topic status is incompatible with the new information focus associated with VP-internal object positions. However, when a strong object pronoun contributes some new information to the discourse, we might expect it to remain in [Spec, VP]. Since independent object pronouns do just that, I will assume that they would appear in [Spec, VP] rather than [Spec, *v*P] at Spell-Out (85), and will thus be unable to check objective Pos-Case.[45]

(85) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of an independent object pronoun in an ellipsis approach[46]



This means that an independent pronoun interpreted as the object of a verb will be influenced by Def-Case rather than Pos-Case. The same goes for any independent pronoun interpreted as the object of a (covert) preposition.

If we treat independent pronouns as nonsentential constituents (cf. Barton 1990), they will have the status of independent DPs throughout the derivation (86).

(86) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status of an independent pronoun in a nonsentential constituent analysis

As a consequence, even independent pronouns interpreted as the subject of a finite clause will be influenced by the Def-Case constraint rather than Pos-Case requirements.

Barton (1990: 112) argues that the interpretation of all nonsentential constituents is determined by Discourse Inference. According to Barton (1990:

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[45] In an ellipsis approach, an independent object pronoun would thus have the same status as an object pronoun in bare argument ellipsis (cf. Section 4.10) or in the second conjunct of a gapped sentence that lacks an overt lexical verb (cf. Section 4.9).

[46] Since the presence or absence of higher functional projections at Spell-Out has no bearing on the case status of an object in [Spec, VP], I have decided to show only the immediate environment of the pronoun in the tree-diagram.

112), Discourse Inference 'is triggered by a match between an independent constituent utterance [i.e. nonsentential constituent] and an expansion possibility of a previous element within a structure of linguistic context', where 'expansion possibility' refers to the ability to take arguments or modifiers.

Since Discourse Inference effectively links a nonsentential pronoun to an open or filled position in the argument structure of a predicate in the linguistic context (cf. Barton 1990: 112-128), we might expect an independent pronoun to be influenced by Arg-Case requirements even when it is analysed as a nonsentential constituent. The variation between nominative and objective pronoun forms in contexts where the independent pronoun is interpreted as the subject of a finite clause, could then be seen as the result of competition between Arg-Case, which requires the highest argument of a predicate to be nominative, and Def-Case, which calls for the use of objective pronoun forms.[47]

If we want to maintain a purely case-based approach, we will only be able to account for the general preference for objective independent pronoun forms if we assume that the influence of the Arg-Case constraint is weaker than the influence of the Def-Case constraint when the argument status of a pronoun is determined through Discourse Inference.

Alternatively, the preferential selection of objective pronoun forms could be seen as evidence that the Arg-Case and Def-Case constraint interact with the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them.*

While the interaction of the case constraints will predict variation between nominative and object pronoun forms when an independent pronoun is interpreted as a subject, no purely case-based analysis can account for the case differences between 1sg and 3sgF pronouns in examples like (87).

(87) **She**: Oh! **Me**: That's just what you are. **She**: You're just hard and mean. **Me**: Who's mean? ... (W. Sansom, *The cautious heart*, (Hogarth Press) 1969 [1958]: 137) [Erdmann 1978: 68]

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[47] Barton herself proposes the following case-rule for non-sentential constituents (1990: 89-91):

(i) Case Rule for NP constituent structures
If N'' is the initial node, then assign any Case.

The drawback of Barton's case rule is that it is unable to explain why independent pronouns are more likely to surface in the nominative if they are interpreted as the subject of a clause than as the object of a verb or preposition.

The occurrence of the 1sg objective form *me* in the same environment as the 3sgF nominative *she*, is reminiscent of the case trends found in coordinates. In coordinates, *me* and *she* tend to be found in initial rather than final conjuncts, and in the passage quoted in (87), both *she* and *me* appear in initial position, before the quote. The case differences between the 1sg and 3sgF pronouns in (87) could thus be seen as evidence that the forms *me* and *she* are favoured in initial position.

4.5 Pronoun case after *be*

In Present-Day English, a lone pronoun generally surfaces in its objective form when it appears immediately after the verb in a basic declarative sentence (88).

(88) a. I saw **him / * he**.
b. They visited **me / * I**.
c. We gave **them / * they** the keys.

When a lone pronoun occurs after main verb *be*, on the other hand, it may take either the nominative or the objective form.

The following constructions involving *be* are particularly prone to case variation:

(a) basic identificational sentences, such as: *I am **he/him**.*

(b) *it BE* sentences, such as: *It is **I/me**.*

(c) *it*-clefts with a pronominal focus, such as: *It was **they/them** who had taken it.*

In the following three sections, I will look at each of these constructions in turn, and I will argue that the potential for case variation arises from the fact that they all involve identificational *be*, which fails to project a *v*P-layer, and is thus unable to check objective Pos-Case on an argument in postverbal position (cf. Section 2.2.2.1).

4.5.1 Pronouns in basic identificational sentences

4.5.1.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

Many of Jespersen & Haislund's (1949: 251) and Visser's (1963: 236ff) examples of nominatives after *be* in basic identificational sentences, come from Early Modern English texts (89).

(89) Early Modern English examples of nominative pronoun forms after *be* in basic identificational sentences

a. [if that I am **I**], then well I know your weeping sister is no wife of mine (Shakespeare, *Comedy of errors*: III. ii. 41) [Visser 1963: 236]

b. that shall not be **I** ([Udall], *Ralph Roister Doister*, ed. Arber, [1553 ?]: 21) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251]

c. they sayd alle, O my lord sir launcelot, [be that **ye**], and he sayd [Truly I am **he**] (Thomas Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*, ed. O. Sommer, London 1889 [1485]: 713) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251]

d. [If thou art **she**], tell me where is that son that floated with thee on the fatal raft (Shakespeare, *Comedy of errors*: V. i. 349) [Visser 1963: 238]

e. this is not **she** ([Udall], *Ralph Roister Doister*, ed. Arber, [1553 ?]: 26) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251]

As can be seen from the examples in (89), the occurrence of a nominative form in postverbal position is independent of verb agreement. In (89c) and (89d) the verb clearly agrees with the preceding 1sg and 2sg pronoun, respectively, yet the 3sg pronoun following the verb still surfaces in the nominative case.

We still find instances of postverbal nominatives in more recent texts (90), but objective forms are clearly more common than nominatives in Present-Day English, no matter whether the other argument shares the ϕ-features of the postverbal pronoun (91), or has different ϕ-features (92).[48]

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[48] For further examples and discussion see Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 251-253), Visser (1963: 236-243), Erdmann (1978: 74), Emonds (1986: 95f, 104f, 115-120), Householder (1987: 179f), Wales (1996: 94f), and Sobin (1997: 334). Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 255) argue that the nominative is obligatory when the two pronouns in an identificational sentence have the same ϕ-features (i.e. the same person, number, and gender), but they themselves quote examples like (91b), which violate this generalisation.

(90) 20th century examples of nominative pronouns after *be* in basic identificational sentences

a. as the only celebrant at the festivities so costumed had been the Vicomte de Blissac, [the butler consequently must have been **he**]
(P.G. Wodehouse, *Hot water*, [1932]: 122) [Visser 1963: 237][49]

b. the axiom [that he was **he**]
(Arnold Bennett, *Old wives' tale*, Tauchnitz 1909 [1908]: 2.50)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 255]

(91) a. I'm not a fish in the sea. I'm **me**.
(advertisement for Cachet perfume) [Wales 1996: 95]

b. since we are **us** (Edward F. Benson, *Dodo*, Tauchnitz 1894 [1893]: 2.330)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 253]

(92) a. [You're **him**] (Dick Francis, *Whip hand*, New York (Pocket Books) 1981 [1979]: 180) [Householder 1987: 180]

b. [If I was **her**], I would not have to put up with it
(Jane Austen, *Pride and prejudice*, London 1894 [1813]: 284)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 253]

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[49] It is important to note, that the definite noun phrase *the butler* is referential rather than predicative in this example.
As Heggie (1988) points out, definite noun phrases in apparently identificational sentences often have a predicative character. Thus the noun phrase *the teacher* in (i) and (ii), is most readily analysed as a property predicated of *John*, rather than a referential noun phrase that picks out an individual identified with John.

(i) John is the teacher.
(ii) The teacher is John.

In (90a), on the other hand, *the butler* is used to refer to a particular individual (the person dressed as the butler at the festivities), which suggests that the sentence is indeed identificational rather than predicative. The subject status of *the butler* in (90a) is highlighted by its ability to be modified by *only* (iii) and to appear as the focus of a subject cleft (iv).

(iii) Only the butler is him [i.e. the Vicomte de Blissac].
(iv) It's the butler that is him [i.e. the Vicomte de Blissac].

As can be seen from the ungrammaticality of (v)-(vi) under a predicative interpretation, fronted predicate phrases are unable to be modified by *only* and cannot appear as the focus of a subject cleft (cf. Heggie 1988: 133f).

(v) * It's the teacher who/that is John. [if *the teacher* is interpreted as a predicate]
(vi) * Only the teacher is John. [if *the teacher* is interpreted as a predicate]

The only way to render (v) and (vi) grammatical is to interpret *the teacher* as picking out a particular individual, which is subsequently identified with John.

Wh-pronouns in identificational *wh*-questions generally surface in the nominative form *who*, regardless of whether they function as the subject (93) or not (94).

(93) Identificational *wh*-questions where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the lower argument of *be*[50]

a. **Who** am I?

b. They don't know [**who** I am].

c. 'But **who** is she?' (Kingsley Amis, *Take a girl like you*: 276) [Erdmann 1978: 68]

d. We don't know [**who** she is].

(94) Multiple *wh*-questions involving identificational *be*, where the first *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject, and the second *wh*-pronoun functions as the lower argument of *be*

a. **Who**'s **who** (title of a biographical lexicon) [Jespersen 1946: 495]

b. she nyste [**who** was **who**] (Chaucer, Skeat's six-volume ed., *Canterbury tales*: Group A, 4300) [Jespersen 1946: 495]

c. I showed the Bishop of Clogher, at Court, [**who** was **who**] (Jonathan Swift, *Journal to Stella*, ed. Aitken, London 1901: 487) [Jespersen 1946: 495]

In embedded questions, an initial *wh*-pronoun may sometimes take the objective form *whom* (95), but only when it does not function as the subject.[51]

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[50] Note that normal *wh*-questions involving identificational *be* need to be distinguished from metalinguistic *wh*-questions (i), where the form of the pronoun is copied from the preceding utterance.

(i) Examples of pronouns after *be* in metalinguistic questions

a. 'It's me,' I said. 'Who's **me**?' he growled. (Alan Sillitoe. 1972 (1970). *A start in life*. Pan Books; 48) [Erdmann 1978: 68]

b. We had a breakdown ... Who's **we**? (Bennett P 311) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

c. We were under the impression that you had a case this morning. - Who is **we**? (Somerset Maugham, Pl 3.154) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

As can be seen from the 3sg verb form in (ia-c), the *wh*-pronoun functions as the subject in metalinguistic *wh*-questions, and the postverbal pronoun resembles an echo, which just copies a part of a preceding utterance (cf. Barton 1990: 223 n.28).

[51] See Section 3.5 for further discussion.

(95) Instances of initial *whom* in embedded questions involving identificational *be*

a. then I know [**whom** you are]
(Hall Caine, *The Christian*, London 1897: 422) [Jespersen 1946: 483f]

b. She did not know [**whom** this strange young man might be]
(Hugh Walpole, *Fortitude*, [1913]: 138) [Jespersen 1946: 484]

In free relatives involving VP-ellipsis, the *wh*-pronoun may surface as *whom* when the whole relative appears after identificational *be* (96).[52]

(96) Instances of *whom* in free relatives involving VP-ellipsis, where the relative appears after the verb *be*

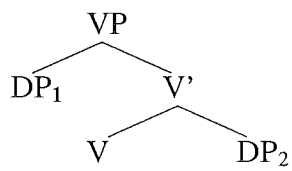
a. she had determined to leave Nancy her ornaments, let Gilbert's wife be [**whom** she might] (George Eliot, *Silas Marner*, Tauchnitz or Everyman ed., [1861]: 148) [Jespersen 1946: 483]

b. General Baird announced ... that any thief detected in the fact, be he [**whom** he might], should be hung (Wilkie Collins, *The moonstone*, (The World's Classics) [1868]: 5) [Jespersen 1946: 483]

4.5.1.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

As mentioned in Section 2.2.2.1, I would like to propose that identificational *be* takes two arguments, both of which are base-generated within VP in basic identificational sentences (97).

(97) Tree diagram illustrating the base position of the two arguments in a basic identificational sentence



Arg-Case linking assigns nominative Arg-Case to the higher argument (DP_1), and objective Arg-Case to the lower argument (DP_2).

Since identificational *be* does not project a *v*P-layer, only one of its two arguments will be able to raise out of VP and enter into Pos-Case checking with a higher agreement-related functional head. The argument remaining within the VP will be subject to Arg-Case and Def-Case requirements.

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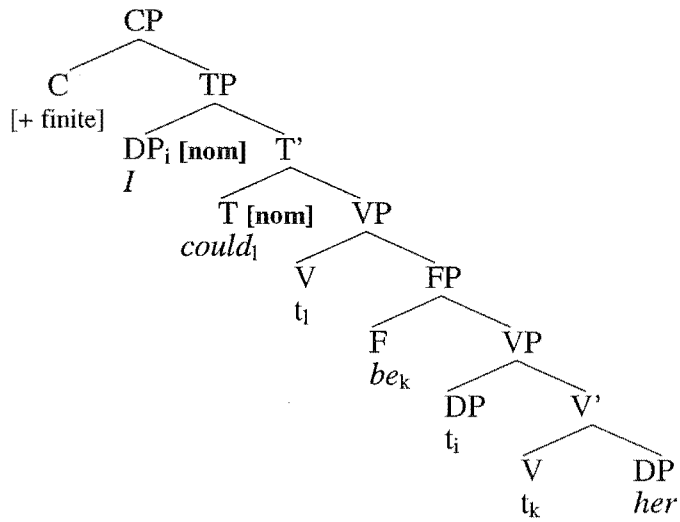
[52] For a more detailed discussion of free relatives involving VP-ellipsis, see Sections 3.4.7-3.4.8.

If we assume that it is the higher argument that raises to [Spec, TP] in a basic identificational sentence (98), we would predict that the argument following *be* should always surface in the objective form demanded by the Arg-Case and Def-Case constraints.

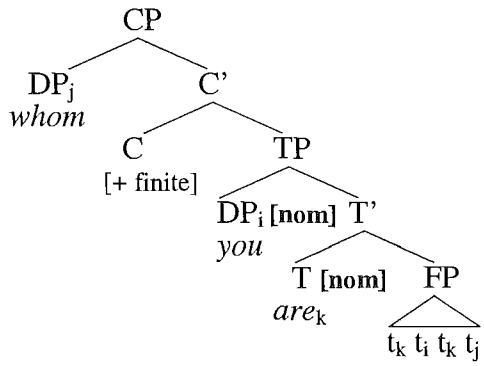
(98) Tree diagram illustrating the case status of the two arguments in a basic identificational sentence, if we assume that the higher argument raises to [Spec, TP] before Spell-Out[53]



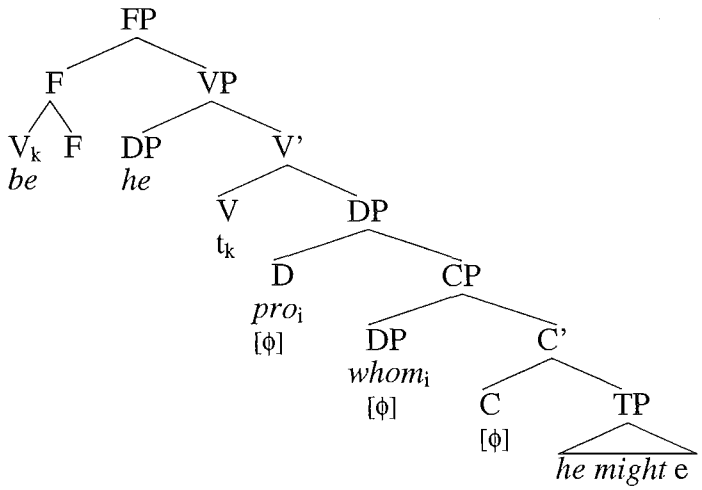
The analysis in (98) thus correctly predicts the present-day preference for objective personal pronoun forms after *be* in basic identificational sentences (91)-(92). It can also account for the occurrence of *whom* in embedded questions and free relatives involving VP-ellipsis where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the lower argument of identificational *be* (95)-(96). As can be seen from (99)-(101), the *wh*-pronoun appears in a position not covered by Pos-Case in both of these constructions, and is therefore subject to Arg-Case and Def-Case requirements, just like the VP-internal argument in (98).

[53] As mentioned in Sections 2.2.2.1 and 3.5.2, I am assuming that lexical verbs generally raise out of their base-position before Spell-Out. Since the functional head (F) targeted by this movement is associated with the tense-aspect system rather than the argument structure of the verb, it is present even in identificational sentences, which lack a *v*P-layer. Identificational *be* must raise at least as far as FP before Spell-Out, but may undergo further raising to T and C, because of its auxiliary qualities.

(99) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and case status of the arguments in an embedded *wh*-question where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the lower argument of identificational *be*

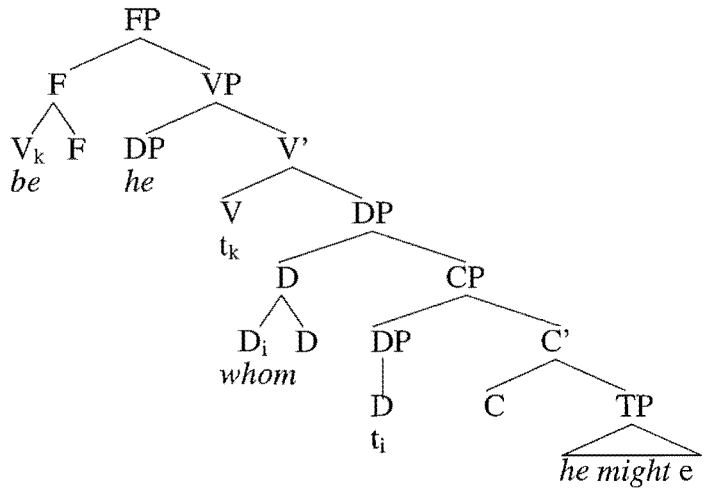


(100) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of a *wh*-pronoun in a free relative where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the lower argument of identificational *be*, if we assume that free relatives are headed by a *pro* that is identified with the *wh*-pronoun through ϕ-feature agreement (= *pro*-head approach)[54]



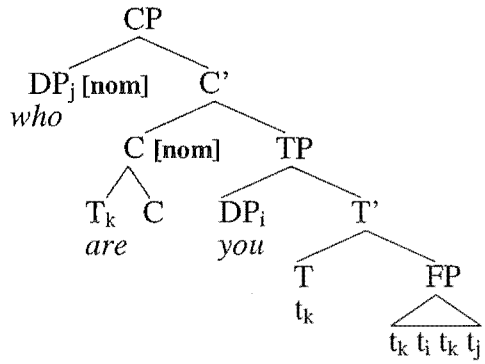
[54] See Sections 3.7.3 and 3.7.5 for a more detailed discussion of the syntactic status of *wh*-pronouns in free relatives.

(101) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of the *wh*-pronoun in a free relative where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the lower argument of identificational *be*, if we assume that free relatives are headed by the *wh*-pronoun (= *wh*-head approach)



In a matrix question corresponding to the embedded question in (99), the *wh*-pronoun can be argued to occupy a nominative Pos-Case position, because T raises to C before Spell-Out, and thus endows C with the ability to check nominative Pos-Case on a DP in its specifier (102).

(102) Tree diagram illustrating the case status of the *wh*-pronoun in a matrix question where the *wh*-pronoun functions as the lower argument of identificational *be*



We would therefore predict that an initial *wh*-pronoun in matrix questions involving identificational *be* will always surface in the nominative form *who* (cf. (93a) and (93c)).

The ready occurrence of *who* in embedded questions and free relatives like (103), on the other hand, is more difficult to account for in a purely case-based approach.

(103) a. They don't know [**who** I am].
b. ...let her be [**who** she might].

As mentioned in Section 3.5.2, the *wh*-pronoun could be argued to acquire nominative Arg-Case through its interpretive relationship with the higher argument of identificational *be*. However, if the selection of *who* in (103) was due to Arg-Case agreement in Present-Day English, we would expect to find an equally high preference for nominative pronoun forms after *be* in all declarative identificational sentences. This does not appear to be the case. In Present-Day English, personal pronouns are much more likely to surface in their objective form after *be* in basic identificational sentences, than in their nominative form (cf. (91)-(92)). It thus seems more plausible that the use of *who* in embedded indentificational questions and free relatives is triggered by non-case factors, most notably the trend towards invariant *who* in all *wh*-contexts.

Although there is little evidence for general Arg-Case agreement in identificational sentences, we might speculate that Arg-Case agreement is a factor in the clear preference for *who* after *be* in multiple *wh*-questions involving identificational *be* (104), and in the occurrence of postverbal nominatives in identificational sentences where both arguments have identical ϕ-features (105).

(104) a. Who's **who** (title of a biographical lexicon) [Jespersen 1946: 495]

b. she nyste [who was **who**] (Chaucer, Skeat's six-volume ed., *Canterbury tales*: Group A, 4300) [Jespersen 1946: 495]

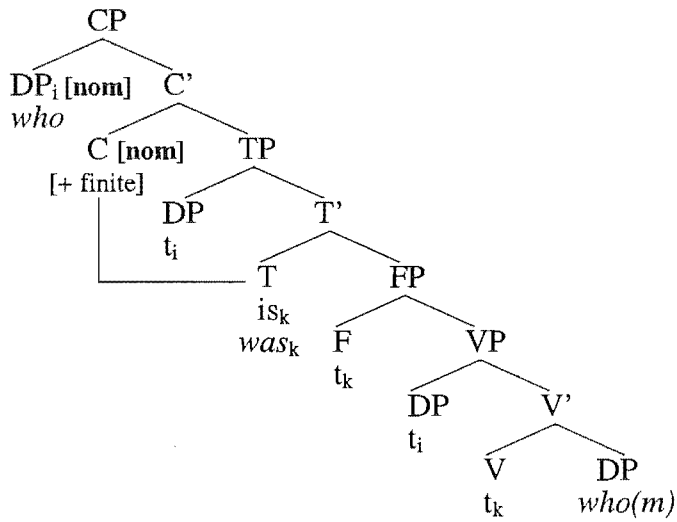
(105) a. [if that I am **I**], then well I know your weeping sister is no wife of mine (Shakespeare, *Comedy of errors*: III. ii. 41) [Visser 1963: 236]

b. the axiom [that he was **he**]
(Arnold Bennett, *Old wives' tale*, Tauchnitz 1909 [1908]: 2.50)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 255]

As the word order in embedded contexts shows (104b), the initial *wh*-pronoun has subject status in multiple *wh*-questions, which means that the *wh*-pronoun following *be* occupies a VP-internal position at Spell-Out (106). The

postverbal *wh*-pronoun in (104) thus has the same syntactic status as the postverbal personal pronouns in (105).[55]

(104) Tree diagram illustrating the case status of the two arguments in multiple *wh*-questions involving identificational *be*, if we assume that the higher argument raises to [Spec, TP] before Spell-Out



Since C is able to acquire the ability to check nominative Pos-Case from T when no overt element intervenes between the two heads at Spell-Out, the Pos-Case constraint would predict that the initial *wh*-pronoun in a multiple *wh*-question will surface in the nominative form *who*. The use of of *who* in initial position will be further reinforced by the Arg-Case constraint, which requires the highest argument of a predicate to surface in the nominative case.

In the absence of Arg-Case agreement, a *wh*-pronoun or personal pronoun following *be* would be predicted to surface in its objective form, because it is the lower argument of the verb, and occupies a position not covered by Pos-Case. The use of *who* and *he* after *be* in (104) and (105), respectively, could thus be seen as evidence that the lower argument of identificational *be* may inherit the Arg-Case of the higher argument, provided the two arguments have identical ϕ-features.

While Arg-Case agreement can account for the possible occurrence of nominative pronoun forms after *be* in (104)-(105), it cannot explain why *who* is virtually obligatory after *be* in multiple *wh*-questions like (104), even though objective personal pronoun forms may occur after *be* in identificational

[55] Compare the tree diagram given in (98), which illustrates the surface position and case status of a personal pronoun following *be* in a basic identificational sentence.

declaratives of the kind illustrated in (105).[56] This case difference between *wh*-pronouns and personal pronouns in identificational sentences suggests that the selection of *who* after *be* in multiple *wh*-questions may be further reinforced by the trend towards invariant *who*. Since the emerging invariant forms for personal pronouns are objective rather than nominative, no such reinforcement of the nominative form is available for personal pronouns.

If we assume that Arg-Case agreement is possible only in identificational sentences where the two arguments of *be* have identical ϕ-features, we will have to find a different explanation for the occurrence of postverbal nominatives in sentences like (107).

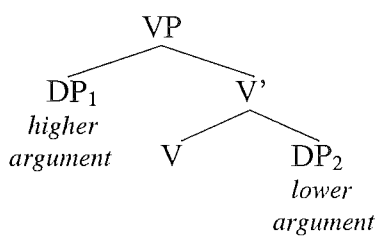
(107) a. that shall not be **I**
([Udall], *Ralph Roister Doister*, ed. Arber, [1553 ?]: 21)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251]

b. they sayd alle, O my lord sir launcelot, [be that **ye**], and he sayd [Truly I am **he**] (Thomas Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*, ed. O. Sommer, London 1889 [1485]: 713) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251]

c. as the only celebrant at the festivities so costumed had been the Vicomte de Blissac, [the butler consequently must have been **he**]
(P.G. Wodehouse, *Hot water*, [1932]: 122) [Visser 1963: 237]

I would like to propose that the pronouns following *be* in (107) surface in their nominative form because they are analysed as the highest argument of the verb. As illustrated in (108), the higher argument of identificational *be* in a basic identificational sentence is base-generated in [Spec, VP], while the lower argument is base-generated as the complement of V.

(108) Tree diagram illustrating the base position of the two arguments in a basic identificational sentence

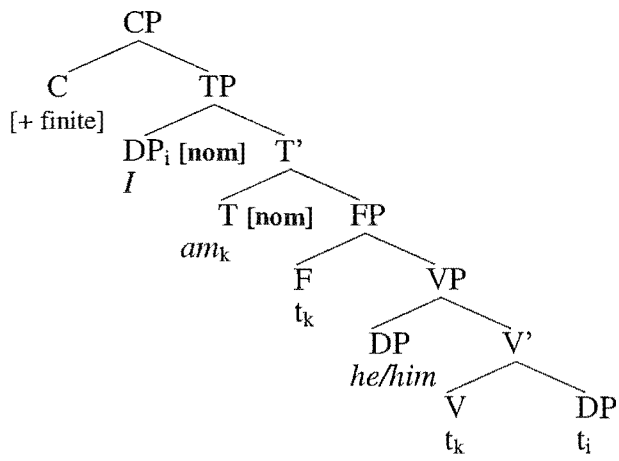


[56] See (91) in Section 4.5.1.1 for examples.

Collins (1997: 27f) argues that two phrases are equidistant from a specifier position targeted by movement if they are base-generated within the minimal domain of the same head. This means that an argument base-generated as the complement of V should be equally able to raise to [Spec, TP] as an argument base-generated in [Spec, VP].

If we assume that the base position of arguments is associated with new information focus (cf. Sections 2.2.2.1, 4.3.2 and 4.4.2), then we might expect the lower rather than the higher argument to raise out of VP when the higher argument receives some kind of rhematic interpretation. I would like to argue that this is exactly what happens in (107). In the proposed analysis, the examples in (107) would thus have the syntactic structure given in (109).

(109) Tree diagram illustrating the case status of the two arguments in a basic identificational sentence, if we assume that the lower argument raises to [Spec, TP] before Spell-Out



In (109), the lower argument occupies [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out, while the higher argument has remained within VP. The argument in [Spec, TP] will thus receive objective Arg-Case and nominative Pos-Case, while the postverbal argument will be linked to nominative Arg-Case and objective Def-Case. Since Pos-Case overrides Arg-Case in Present-Day English, the preverbal argument will always surface in its nominative form. The postverbal argument, on the other hand, may surface either in the nominative form demanded by the Arg-Case constraint, or in the objective form required by the Def-Case constraint.

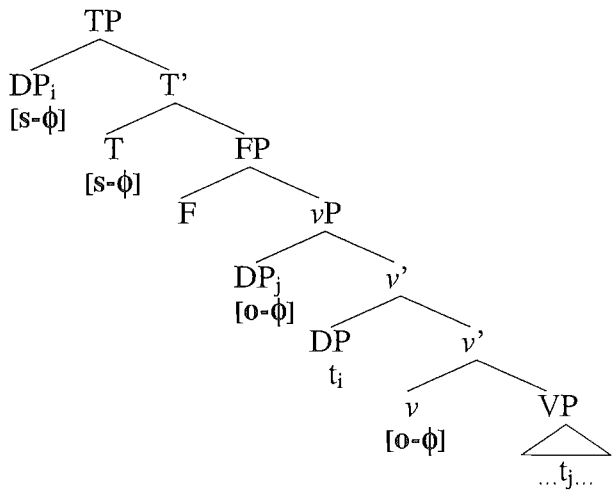
As can be seen from the examples in (107), the verb always agrees with the preverbal argument in a basic identificational sentence. The proposed analysis therefore requires us to assume that verb-agreement is primarily determined by

surface configurations rather than argument status. This suggests that we not only need to distinguish Argument Case, Positional Case, and Default Case in Present-Day English, but also Argument Agreement (Arg-Agreement), Positional Agreement (Pos-Agreement), and Default Agreement (Def-Agreement).

Like verb-related Arg-Case, Arg-Agreement is determined on the basis of the argument hierarchy of the verb. A verb will show subject Arg-Agreement with the highest argument on its argument hierarchy, and object Arg-Agreement with a lower argument.

Pos-Agreement, like Pos-Case, is determined on the basis of syntactic configurations at Spell-Out. A verb will show subject Pos-Agreement with an argument noun phrase that occupies [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out,[57] and object Pos-Agreement with an argument noun phrase that occupies [Spec, *v*P] at Spell-Out (110).[58] As with Pos-Case checking, Pos-Agreement can occur only when the surface position of the argument noun phrase in question differs from its θ-position.

(110) Tree diagram illustrating the surface configurations that will give rise to subject (s-ϕ) and object (o-ϕ) Pos-Agreement



[57] Gelderen (1997: 106) presents evidence from Early Modern English which suggests that in languages where finite lexical verbs are able to raise to C, the subject Pos-Agreement features of a verb in C are determined by an argument noun phrase in [Spec, CP] rather than [Spec, TP] (i).

(i) What **cares** these roarers for the name of King (Shakespeare, *The tempest*: I. i. 17)

[58] As we will see in Chapter 5, the syntactic positions associated with Pos-Agreement also serve as licensing positions for weak pronouns in Present-Day English: weak subject pronouns are licensed in [Spec, TP] and weak object pronouns are licensed in [Spec, *v*P]

When Pos-Agreement is not possible,[59] the verb will be influenced by (subject and/or object) Def-Agreement. In Modern English, the subject Def-Agreement form of a verb is its 3sg form.

If we assume that Pos-Agreement overrides Arg-Agreement in Present-Day English, just like Pos-Case overrides Arg-Case, we would predict that the verb will agree with the preverbal argument, even when the postverbal argument is the higher argument of *be*.

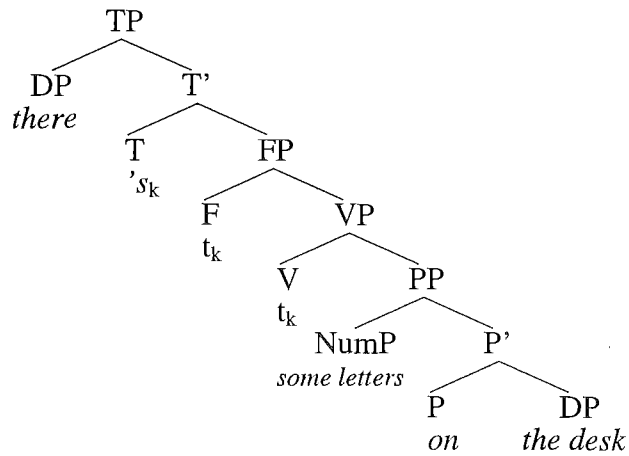
Independent evidence for the need to distinguish between Pos-Agreement and Arg-Agreement comes from the breakdown of agreement in *there BE* sentences, where the verb may agree either with the postverbal noun phrase (111), or surface in the 3sg default form (112).[60]

(111) a. There **are** some letters on the desk.
b. There **are/'re** problems with your proposal. (Lakoff 1987: 547)

(112) a. There's some letters on the desk. (Sobin 1997: 341)
b. There's problems with your proposal. (Lakoff 1987: 547)

The variation in agreement supports the analysis of *there* as an expletive rather than an argument in Present-Day English (cf. Gelderen 1997: 111-123). If *there* is an expletive, [Spec, TP] in sentences like (111)-(112) will not be filled by a noun phrase that could trigger subject Pos-Agreement on the verb, and the verb will instead be influenced by 3sg Def-Agreement (113).

(113)



[59] That is, when the relevant specifier position (i.e. [Spec, TP], [Spec, *v*P], and possibly [Spec, CP] in languages where finite lexical verbs are able to raise to C) is not filled by an argument noun phrase, or when it is filled by an argument noun phrase whose surface position is identical to its θ-position.

[60] For further examples and discussion see Lakoff (1987: 547f), Bartlett (1992: 13), Sobin (1997: 332-342), Gelderen (1997: 105-123), Deevy (1998).

Since *there* is not an argument of the verb in such an analysis, the subject Arg-Agreement features of the verb will be determined by the postverbal noun phrase:[61] if the postverbal noun phrase has 3pl features, the subject Arg-Agreement features of the verb will be 3pl (111); if the postverbal noun phrase has 3sg features, the subject Arg-Agreement features of the verb will also be 3sg (114).

(114) a. There **is** a letter on the desk.
b. There **is** a problem with your proposal.

When the postverbal noun phrase has 3pl features, the Arg-Agreement features of the verb will clash with the 3sg features assigned by Def-Agreement, and the potential for variation arises (cf. (111)-(112)).

4.5.2 Pronouns in *it BE* sentences

4.5.2.1 The historical development of the *it BE* construction

As can be seen from the table in (115), the word order, case, and agreement properties of *it BE* sentences have undergone a number of changes throughout the history of English.

[61] I am assuming that copular *be* combines with the predicate of its small clause complement to form a complex predicate at the level of Semantic Form. As as result, the highest argument of the small clause predicate is also the highest argument of *be*.

(115) The historical evolution of *it BE* sentences
(cf. Foulet 1936: 54; Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251f; Visser 1963: 41f, 236-241; Traugott 1972: 126; Gelderen 1997: 150, 157f)

Old English & Early Middle English The focus pronoun is in the nominative and precedes both *it* and the verb. The verb agrees with the nominative pronoun.	ic hit eom Þu hit eart he hit is heo hit is we hit sind ge hit sind hie hit sind
Late Middle English (Chaucer) The focus pronoun is in the nominative and follows *it* and the verb. The verb agrees with the postverbal nominative pronoun.	it am I it art thou it is he it is she it are we it are ye it are they
Early Modern English onwards The focus pronoun is in the nominative and follows *it* and the verb. The verb shows invariant 3sg inflection, and could thus be argued to agree with *it*.	it is I it is thou it is he it is she it is we it is ye it is they
Modern English The focus pronoun appears in its object form and follows *it* and the verb. The verb shows invariant 3sg inflection. The sequence *it is* is often contracted to *it's*.	it is me it is thee/you it is him it is her it is us it is you it is them

In Old English the focus pronoun appeared in preverbal position, triggered agreement on the verb, and always surfaced in the nominative case (116).

(116) **ic** hit <u>eom</u>
1sg.NOM *it* *be.1SG*

This suggests that in Old English, the focus pronoun was analysed as the highest argument of *be* in *it BE* sentences.

At the end of the Middle English period, the focus pronoun started to appear in postverbal position, but it still surfaced in the nominative form and, at least initially, also triggered agreement on the verb (117). [62]

(117) 'Quy la' quod he. 'Peter, it <u>am</u> I', Quod she.
(Chaucer, *Shipman's Tale*: VII. 214-5) [Gelderen 1997: 157]

By the start of the Early Modern English period, the verb no longer agrees with the focus pronoun, even if it occurs in the nominative case, but instead shows invariant 3sg inflection, which could be seen as agreement with preverbal *it* (118).

(118) it <u>is</u> I (*The Townley plays*, ed. England, EETS 1897: 129)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251]

The obligatory use of nominative pronoun forms in the focus position during the Late Middle English and Early Modern English period, indicates that the focus pronoun was still analysed as the highest argument of *be*. As discussed in Section 4.5.1.2, a pronoun following *be* in an identificational sentence would only be expected to surface in the nominative case if it received nominative Arg-Case through structural linking or through Arg-Case agreement with a nominative argument. Since Arg-Case agreement appears to be limited to identificational sentences where the two arguments have identical ϕ-features, the only possible source for the nominative case on the postverbal pronoun in (117)-(118) would be its own position on the argument hierarchy.

The changes in verb agreement between (117) and (118) could be seen as indicative of the increasing importance of Positional Agreement during the Middle English period. In the approach to case and agreement proposed here, the verb will only show consistent subject agreement with a postverbal noun phrase if

(a) the postverbal noun phrase is the highest argument on the argument hierarchy **and**

(b) Argument Agreement (Arg-Agreement) is more influential than Positional Agreement (Pos-Agreement).

The agreement between the verb and the focus pronoun in (117) thus suggests that Arg-Agreement was able to override Pos-Agreement during Chaucer's time. By

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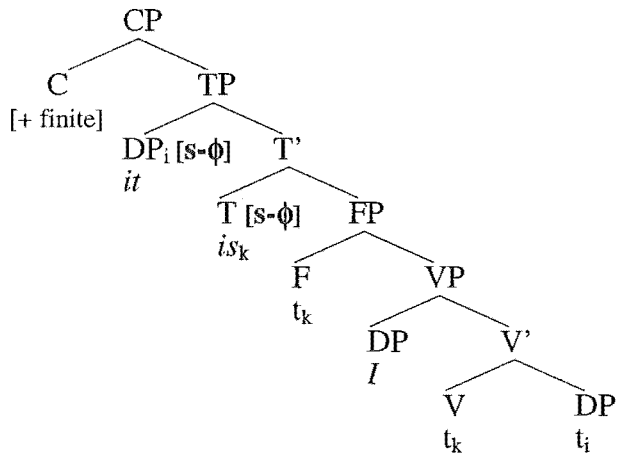
[62] In Section 10.3.1, I will present evidence indicating that even in Old English, the tensed verb failed to raise beyond T except in direct questions, V-initial declaratives and imperatives, narrative-advancing clauses with an adverb in initial position, and some clauses with a negated V (cf. Pintzuk 1995 & 1996). Since there does not appear to be any independent evidence for verb raising to C in identificational sentences at any period in the history of English, I will assume that any postverbal focus pronoun in an identificational sentence occupies its VP-internal base position at Spell-Out.

the start of the Early Modern English period however, Pos-Agreement is clearly dominant, and the verb obligatorily surfaces in the 3sg form required by subject Pos-Agreement with the preverbal 3sg pronoun *it* (119).

(119) Tree diagram illustrating the structure and Pos-Agreeement properties of *it BE* sentences in the Late Middle English period



The consistent use of the 3sg verb form in *it BE* sentences from the Late Middle English period onwards, would seem to provide evidence that *it* is indeed an argument of the verb, and thus able to trigger Pos-Agreement rather than Def-Agreement.[63]

Further evidence for the argument status of *it* in *it BE* constructions comes from the favoured Modern English version of the construction. In Modern English the finite verb always appears in the 3sg form in *it BE* sentences, and the postverbal focus pronoun preferentially surfaces in its objective form (120).[64]

(120) it is **me** - I know it is **me** (Hall Caine, *The Christian*, London 1897: 40) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 252]

This preference for objective focus pronouns indicates that the postverbal pronoun is no longer analysed as the highest argument of *be*, and thus receives objective

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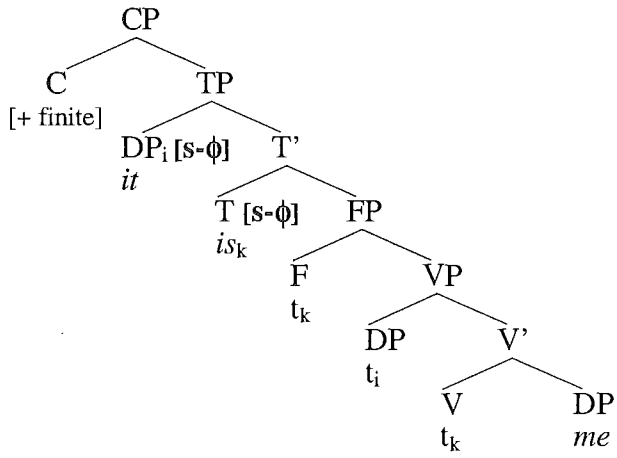
[63] As we saw in Section 4.5.1.2, a clash between Pos-Agreement and Arg-Agreement is always resolved in favour of Pos-Agreement in Present-Day English, whereas a clash between Def-Agreement and Arg-Agreement tends to give rise to variation. If the 3sg form of the verb in *it BE* sentences was the result of Def-Agreement rather than Pos-Agreement, we would expect to find variation between 3sg agreement and agreement with the postverbal noun phrase.

[64] For further data and discussion see: Jespersen (1949 [1927]: 403), Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 253ff), Visser (1963: 240-243), Klima (1964: 3f), Erdmann (1978: 75), Householder (1987), and Wales (1996: 94f).

rather than nominative Arg-Case. Such an analysis is possible only if the verb *be* in *it BE* sentences takes two arguments, one of which is the preverbal pronoun *it*.[65] I will therefore follow Erdmann (1978: 75) in treating *it BE* sentences as a subtype of identificational *be* constructions, and will assume that in Modern English, *it* is generally analysed as the higher argument of the verb (121).[66]

(121) Tree diagram illustrating the structure and Pos-Agreement properties of *it BE* sentences in the Modern English period



4.5.2.2 Present-day case variation in *it BE* sentences

As mentioned in the previous section, the focus pronoun of an *it BE* sentence usually surfaces in the objective case in Present-Day English. However, we do still find instances of nominative focus pronouns in *it BE* sentences (cf. Klima 1964: 3f; Wales 1996: 94f; Sobin 1997: 334; Lasnik & Sobin 2000: 344).

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[65] See Gelderen (1997: 148-151), Vikner (1995: 233), and Everett (1996: 42) for further discussion of the argument status of *it* in *it BE* sentences.

[66] The similarity between basic identificational sentences and *it BE* sentences is highlighted by passages like (i), where the basic identificational sentence *they aren't us* is rephrased as *it isn't us* (cf. also Gundel 1977: 555).

(i) [they aren't us] ... [it isn't us], Stephen, really. It can't be us
(H.G. Wells, *The passionate friends*, London [1913]: 229)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 253]

Apart from *who*, which is as strongly favoured in *it BE* questions as in identificational *wh*-questions (122), the nominative pronoun form most readily used in *it BE* sentences today appears to be the 1sg nominative *I* (123).[67]

(122) a. **Who** was it?
b. I don't know [**who** it was].

(123) It is **I**. / It was **I**. (Sobin 1997: 334)

Non-1sg nominatives would seem to be extremely rare, and restricted to certain discourse contexts (124).

(124) 'Oh, look Dad, there's John Cleese', he said excitedly. It was, of course, **he**. (*The London Evening Standard*, 11 February 1993) [Wales 1996: 95]

The present-day case differences between *wh*-pronouns, 1sg pronouns, and non-1sg pronouns in *it BE* sentences suggest that the surface form of the focus pronoun may be influenced by factors other than case. In examples like (124), the discourse context could be argued to favour an analysis of the focus pronoun as the higher argument of the verb, and thus give rise to the selection of a nominative rather than objective form (cf. (119)). However, the general preference for *who* in *it BE* questions (122), and the comparatively ready occurrence of *I* (123) need to be accounted for in a different way.[68]

As discussed in Section 4.5.1.2, the use of *who* in matrix questions involving identificational *be* can be seen as the result of nominative Pos-Case checking between the verb in C and the *wh*-pronoun in [Spec, CP] (125).

(125) Tree diagram illustrating the case status of the *wh*-pronoun in matrix *it BE* questions

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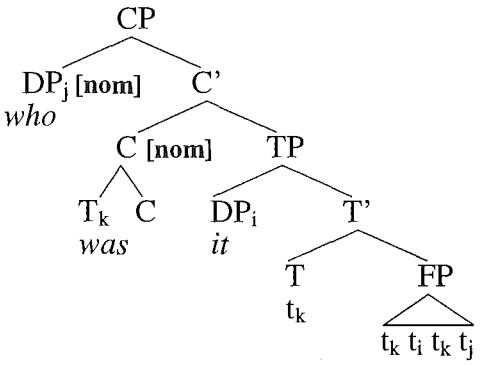
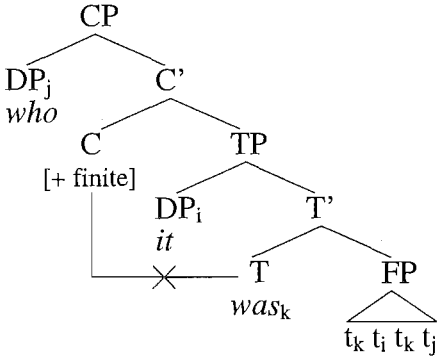
[67] See Sobin (1997: 334) and Lasnik & Sobin (2000: 349f); note also the general focus on the variation between *it (i)s me* and *it (i)s I* in the literature (cf. Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251; Visser 1963: 238-243; Klima 1964: 4; Erdmann 1978; Harris 1981; Quirk et al. 1985: 337).

[68] If we assumed that the use of *who* and *I* in *it BE* sentences arises from an analysis of the focus pronoun as the higher argument, then we would expect to find just as many instances of *he, she, we, they* in basic *it BE* sentences.



In embedded *it BE* questions, nominative Pos-Case checking between the *wh*-pronoun and C is impossible, because *it* intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out (126).

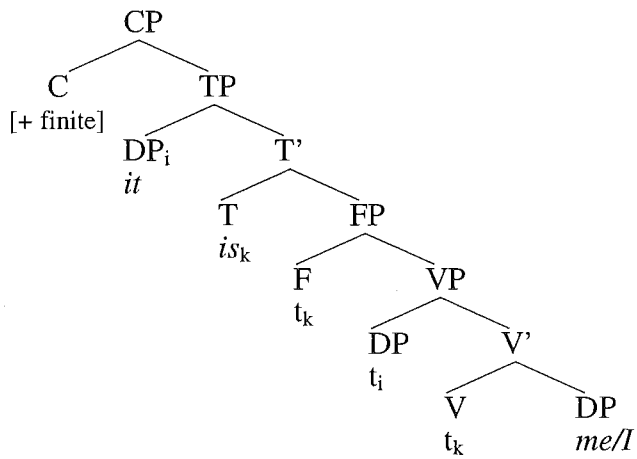
(126) Tree diagram illustrating the lack of nominative Pos-Case on the *wh*-pronoun in an embedded *it BE* question



Given that both the Arg-Case constraint and the Def-Case constraint require the *wh*-pronoun to surface as *whom* if it functions as the lower argument of *be* and appears in a position not covered by Pos-Case, the use of *who* in embedded questions like (122b) is most plausibly analysed as the result of influence from the trend towards invariant *who*.

Since the emerging invariant forms for personal pronouns appear to correspond to their objective rather than nominative forms, the ready occurrence of *I* in *it BE* sentences will have to be due to influence from a different non-case factor. As discussed in Sections 4.5.1.2 and 4.5.2.1, the lower argument of identificational *be* is base-generated as the complement of V. This means that the focus pronoun is asymmetrically c-commanded by the remainder of the clause when it is analysed as the lower argument of *be* (127).

(127) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of the focus pronoun in (unmarked) *it BE* sentences in Present-Day English



The possible occurrence of the 1sg nominative *I* in this context could therefore be seen as evidence that *I* is favoured in asymmetrically c-commanded positions, and thus patterns with the objective *wh*-form *whom* (as well as the objective personal pronoun forms *him, her, us, them*). This classification of *I* as a form favoured in asymmetrically c-commanded positions receives considerable support from the distribution of 1sg forms in coordinates (cf. Section 4.11 and Chapter 7).[69]

4.5.3 Pronouns in the focus of *it*-clefts

The contrast between (128), (129), and (130) indicates that verb agreement and pronoun case in *it*-clefts has undergone changes similar to those found in *it BE* sentences.

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[69]As we will see in Chapter 8, the assumption that the case constraints compete with a constraint relating pronoun form to asymmetric c-command allows us to capture the case similarities between focus pronouns in *it BE* sentences and pronouns in final conjuncts of coordinates. The approach proposed here thus has an advantage over the virus-based analysis proposed by Sobin (1997: 336f), where the use of *I* in *it BE* sentences and the use of *I* in final conjuncts of coordinates are triggered by separate rules (i)-(ii).

(i) The '*it is I*' Rule
If: it [$_{Agrs}$ is/was] [$_{Prn}$ +1, -pl, NOM]...
1 2 3
then: check NOM on 3. (Sobin 1997: 337)

(ii) The '*...and I...*' Rule
If: ...and [$_{Prn}$ +1, +sg, NOM]...
1 2
then: check NOM on 2. (Sobin 1997: 336)

(128) and it am I That loveth so hote Emelye the brighte.
(Chaucer, *Knight's Tale*: 1736-7) [Gelderen 1997]

(129) For it is I that am come down (Chaucer, *Romaunt of the rose*: 4365)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251]

(130) I'm very sorry it's me that affords you amusement (Israel Zangwill, *The grey wig*, London 1903: 355) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 140]

However, while the increasing trend towards the use of objective forms in *it*-clefts is indeed reminiscent of the strong preference for objective pronoun forms in *it BE* sentences,[70] empirical evidence discussed by Erdmann (1978: 75-78) and Wales (1996: 95f) suggests that nominative personal pronoun forms are more readily tolerated in the focus of *it*-clefts than in *it BE* sentences.

4.5.3.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

The distribution of pronoun case forms in *it*-clefts appears to be at least partly influenced by the syntactic properties of the following clause. Factors that have been identified as potentially relevant in existing work include:

(a) the function of the relativised constituent in the clause

(b) the presence versus absence of an overt relative pronoun

(c) the presence versus absence of the complementizer *that*

According to Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 254) and Wales (1996: 95f), nominative focus pronouns are most likely to occur in *it*-clefts where the clause is introduced by a *wh*-pronoun that functions as the subject of the clause (131).

[70] See Akmajian (1970: 150), Harris (1981: 19f), Emonds (1986: 96), Quirk et al. (1985: 338), and Wales (1996: 95).

(131) Examples of nominative pronoun forms in *it*-clefts where the clause is introduced by a *wh*-pronoun functioning as the subject of the clause

a. it was always **I** [who played the temptriss] (Anita Loos, *A mouse is born,* New York (Boni & Liveright) 1951: 195) [Householder 1987: 179]

b. Everything was tidy you see but it was **he** [who explained what it meant] (*Survey of English Usage*, S-01-10, conversation, 1975) [Wales 1996: 95]

c. it was **she** [who had killed him] (Sheila Kaye-Smith, *The end of the House of Alard*, London 1923: 312) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 254]

d. It was **we** [who had driven twenty-four miles] (George Orwell, *Animal farm*, (Penguin Books) 1966 [1945]: 24) [Erdmann 1978: 76]

e. it was **they** [who had taken it] (H.G. Wells, *The time machine*, London 1895: 85) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 254]

However, we also find nominatives in subject *it*-clefts where the clause is introduced by the complementizer *that* rather than a *wh*-pronoun (132).

(132) Examples of nominative pronoun forms in subject *it*-clefts where the clause is introduced by the complementizer *that*

a. if only it was **I** [that was dead] (Evelyn Waugh, *A handful of dust*, (Penguin Books) 1971 [1934]: 115) [Erdmann 1978: 76]

b. it's **they** [that have put the job up]. It's **we** [that run the country for them] (George Bernard Shaw, *Misalliance, The dark lady, Fanny's first play*, London 1914: 27) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 98]

Although objective pronoun forms appear to occur more readily in subject clefts where the clause is introduced by *that* (133), an objective focus may also cooccur with a clause introduced by *who* (134).

(133) Examples of nominative pronoun forms in subject *it*-clefts where the clause is introduced by the complementizer *that*

a. It's **me** [that has to give it up] (Frank Swinnerton, *Noct.*: 189) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 90]

b. It was **her** [that came]. (Quirk et al. 1985: 338)

c. It's **us** [that lifted it from them] not vice versa (*Survey of English Usage*, S-02-05, conversation, 1974) [Wales 1996: 96]

(134) Examples of objective pronoun forms in *it*-clefts where the clause is introduced by a *wh*-pronoun functioning as the subject of the clause

a. It's **me** [who's to blame] (Quirk et al. 1985: 339)

b. It was **him** [who telephoned]? (R. Lehmann, *The echoing grove*, (Collins) 1968 [1953]: 314) [Erdmann 1978: 76]

As can be seen from the examples in (132)-(134), the verb in the clause generally shows number agreement with the focus when the relativised constituent is the subject of the clause (cf. Akmajian 1970: 150f). When a 1sg focus surfaces in the nominative form, the verb in the clause may also exhibit person agreement (135), but it need not (136).[71]

(135) Examples of *it*-clefts where the verb in the clause agrees in person and number with a 1sg nominative focus

a. For it is **I** [that am come down] (Chaucer, *Romaunt of the rose*: 4365) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251]

b. It is **I** [who am having to do with material things] (Ivy Compton-Burnett, *More women than men*, (Gollancz) 1971 [1933]: 131) [Erdmann 1978: 78]

(136) *It*-cleft where the verb in the clause fails to agree in person with a 1sg nominative focus

'Tisn't **I** [that wants to spoil your home] (John Galsworthy, *Plays*, London 1910-14: 12.41) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 88f]

[71] See Akmajian (1970: 152f) for further discussion.

In Present-Day English, subject *it*-clefts usually require the presence of an overt *wh*-pronoun or complementizer in the clause. However, Jespersen (1949 [1927]: 145), Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 254), Visser (1963: 241), and Delahunty (1982: 52) offer some examples from earlier texts where the clause of a subject *it*-cleft lacks both a *wh*-pronoun and the complementizer *that*. In most of these examples, the focus pronoun surfaces in the nominative case, and the verb in the clause agrees with a 1sg focus in person as well as in number (137). At the same time, the occurrence of examples like (138) indicates that a nominative focus is not entirely obligatory, even in this context.

(137) Examples of nominative pronouns in **subject** *it*-clefts where the clause is introduced neither by a *wh*-pronoun nor by the complementizer *that*

a. It is **I** [have led you hither] (Robert Louis Stevenson, *The black arrow*, London 1904 [1888]: 146) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 145]

b. It's **I** [have been stupid] (H.G. Wells, *Love and Mr Lewisham*, London 1900: 296) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 145]

c. It was **he** [had brought back George] (William M. Thackeray, *Vanity fair*, London 1890 [1847-48]: 178) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 145]

d. 'Twas **she** [lent money to Peter Joyce] (E. Somerville and M. Ross, *The real Charlotte*, London (Quartett Books) 1894: 189) [Delahunty 1982: 52]

(138) Examples of objective pronouns in **subject** *it*-clefts where the clause is introduced neither by a *wh*-pronoun nor by the complementizer *that*

a. 'It was **him** [tried to kill me].' ''Twas **him** [fired at you then].' (A.J. Cronin, *Hatter's castle*, London 1932 [1931]: 380) [Visser 1963: 241]

b. It was **them** [told me about her]. ('J.S. Winter', *Bootle's children*, [1888]: XIV (OED)) [Visser 1963: 241]

When the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb or preposition, the clause usually appears without an overt *wh*-pronoun or complementizer, and the focus pronoun generally surfaces in the objective case (139)-(140).

(139) Examples of objective pronoun forms in *it*-clefts where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb, and the clause contains no overt relative pronoun or complementizer

a. Now it was **me** [she addressed]. (A. Powell, *The military philosophers*: 217) [Erdmann 1978: 77]

b. it is **thee** [I feare] (Shakespeare, *Henry VI, Part 2*: IV. i. 117) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 226f]

c. it is not **him** [I want] (William M. Thackeray, *The history of Pendennis*, 1848-50; volume 3, 301) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 226f]

d. It is **her** [you should consult on such a matter] (Anthony Trollope, *An old man's love*, Tauchnitz edition; 121) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 226f]

e. It was not **them** [we wanted] (E. Warburton, *Crescent & Cross I*, [1845]: 331) [Visser 1963: 240]

(140) Examples of objective pronoun forms in *it*-clefts where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a preposition, and the clause contains no overt relative pronoun or complementizer

a. It is not **me** [you are in love with] (Steele, *Spectator* no. 290) [Visser 1963: 240]

b. it's **him** [you've got to settle things with] (Arnold Bennett, *Lord Raingo*, London, 1926; 252) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 227]

c. 'It's **her** [I'm worried about]'. (Graham Greene, *Brighton Rock*, (Penguin Books) 1970 [1938]: 204) [Erdmann 1978: 77]

Nominative focus pronouns appear to be rare in this context, but do occur occasionally (141)-(142).

(141) Example of a nominative focus in an *it*-cleft where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb, and the clause contains no overt relative pronoun or complementizer

It was **she** [John criticized]. (Quirk et al. 1985: 338)

(142) Examples of nominative pronoun forms in *it*-clefts where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a preposition, and the clause contains no overt relative pronoun or complementizer

a. 'But as I told you, Catherine wishes it, and [it is **she** you are so concerned for] (Ivy Compton-Burnett, *The present and the past*, (Penguin Books) 1972 [1953]: 76) [Erdmann 1978: 77]

b. 'It was strange she should have told him not to be afraid of Frank because [it was **she** Harold had always been afraid of]'. (John Updike, *Couples*, (Penguin Books) 1972 [1968]: 134) [Erdmann 1978: 77]

Overt *wh*-pronouns and the complementizer *that* are both disfavoured when the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb or preposition, but when the clause is introduced by *who(m)* or *that*, we again find instances of both objective (143)-(144) and nominative forms (145)-(146) in the focus position.

(143) Examples of objective pronoun forms in *it*-clefts where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb, and the clause is introduced by a *wh*-pronoun

a. 'My dear fellow', said Mackenzie, 'it's not **me** [whom you should ask for all this' (C.S. Forester, *The general*, (Penguin Books) 1968 [1936]: 74) [Erdmann 1978: 77]

b. It's **her** [who(m) Kate dislikes] (Wales 1996: 96)

(144) Example of an objective focus in an *it*-cleft where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb, and the clause is introduced by the complementizer *that*

It was **her** [that John criticized]. (Quirk et al. 1985: 338)

(145) Examples of nominative pronoun forms in *it*-clefts where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb, and the clause is introduced by a *wh*-pronoun

a. 'Yes, it is **they** [whom she is coming to see]'. (Ivy Compton-Burnett, *The present and the past*, (Penguin Books) 1972 [1953]: 31) [Erdmann 1978: 77]

b. Perhaps, indeed, Dorothy was the one who had most to be considered, for it was no doubt **she** [whom the affair was making suffer the most] (R. Fuller, *The father's comedy*, (Penguin Books) 1969 [1961]: 165) [Erdmann 1978: 77]

(146) Example of a nominative focus in an *it*-cleft where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a preposition, and the clause is introduced by the complementizer *that*

It was **he** [that I played with over Christmas in the Maltings in Edinburgh] (*ICE-GB*, S1A-058-67) [Wales 1996: 96]

Both Wales (1996: 96) and Sobin (1997: 334) suggest that the case of the focus in *it*-clefts may depend on the ϕ-features of the focus pronoun as well as the syntactic properties of the clause. However, their observations and predictions are not entirely compatible:

Wales (1996: 96) comments that the use of the 1sg objective form *me* seems more acceptable in subject *it*-clefts than the use of the 1sg nominative *I*, and points out that in her Survey of English Usage corpus, most of the clefts with a nominative focus involve the 3sgM nominative *he* and the 3pl nominative *they*.

Sobin (1997: 334), on the other hand, argues that singular pronouns are generally more likely to surface in the nominative than plural pronouns.

4.5.3.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

In an attempt to capture the links between the focus of an *it*-cleft and the gap in the following clause, Meinunger (1998: 287) proposes a monoclausal analysis for *it*-clefts, where the focus phrase is base-generated within the clause and raises to the specifier of a functional projection in the C-system before Spell-Out.[72] Such a monoclausal analysis would appear to be most plausible when no overt *wh*-pronoun or complementizer is present in the clause (147).[73]

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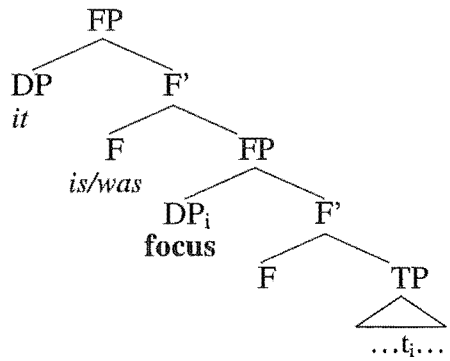
[72] Note that the analysis proposed by Meinunger (1998: 287) is very similar to the analysis proposed by Kayne (1994: 153 n.6), in that the focus constituent is assumed to be base-generated in the gap of the clause in both analyses. However, unlike Meinunger, Kayne appears to assumes an explicitly biclausal analysis, where *it* and *be* appear in the matrix clause, and the focus constituent raises only as high as [Spec, CP] of the embedded clause.

[73] Cf. Harris & Vincent's (1980) suggestions on the structure of *it*-clefts with zero relatives, and Harris & Campbell's (1995: 166ff) observation that clefts often develop into monoclausal focus constructions.

(147) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status of a focus pronoun in a monoclausal analysis of *it*-clefts (cf. Meinunger 1998: 287)[74]



In a monoclausal approach, the focus pronoun will function as the argument of a predicate within TP, and will therefore receive nominative Arg-Case in subject clefts (148a), and objective Arg-Case in clefts where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb (148b) or preposition (148c).

(148) Arg-Case predictions for a monoclausal analysis of *it*-clefts

a. It is **I** have led you hither.
b. It was **me** she addressed.
c. It's not **me** you are in love with.

In subject clefts, the focus pronoun will also be able to check nominative Pos-Case, because the head of the functional projection hosting the focus pronoun is able to acquire the ability to check nominative Pos-Case through surface adjacency with T (149).

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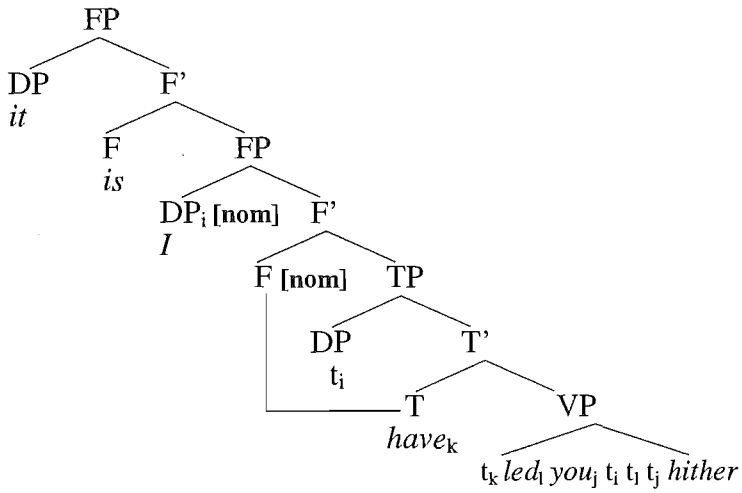
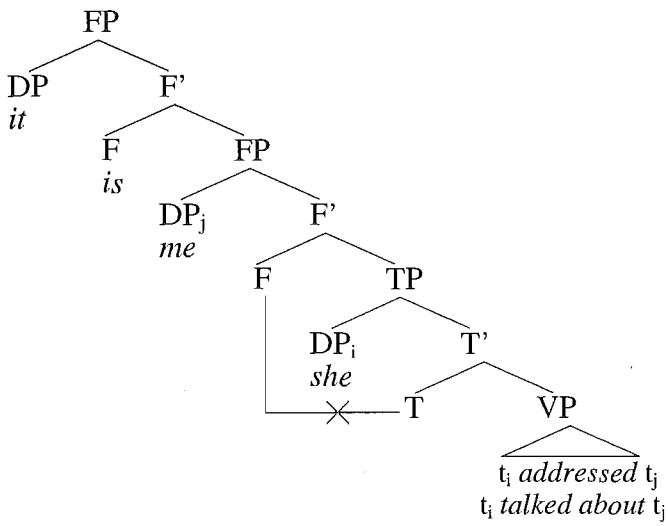
[74] Note that the analysis sketched here differs from that proposed by Meinunger (1998: 287) in that Meinunger assumes that an additional functional projection intervenes between TP and the phrase hosting the focus pronoun at Spell-Out. In Meinunger's (1998: 287) analysis, the head of this additional functional projection may be filled by the complementizer *that*. As we shall see below, the assumption that the complementizer *that* can appear in a position lower than a focused constituent in the C-system is rather problematic. I have therefore omitted the functional projection in question from my tree diagram. I have also decided not to assign specific category labels to the C-related functional projections, because the exact category of the functional heads has little bearing on the predictions of my case constraints. In the approach proposed here, a C-related functional head will only be able to enter into Pos-Case checking with a DP in its specifier if the functional head is filled by T at Spell-Out, or if no overt element intervenes between the functional head and T at Spell-Out.

(149) Tree diagram illustrating the Pos-Case status of the focus pronoun in a subject cleft, if we adopt a monoclausal analysis of *it*-clefts



When the focus has raised from an object or prepositional complement position, on the other hand, it will not be affected by Pos-Case requirements, because the subject of the clause will intervene between T and the higher functional head at Spell-Out (150).

(150) Tree diagram illustrating why the focus pronoun is unable to check nominative Pos-Case when it is followed by an overt subject noun phrase in a monoclausal analysis of *it*-clefts



While such a monoclausal analysis has the advantage of predicting the much greater preference for nominative pronoun forms in subject than in non-subject clefts, it can account neither for the possible occurrence of objective forms in the

focus of subject clefts (cf. (138)), nor for the appearance of nominative pronoun forms in the focus of non-subject clefts (cf. (141)-(142)).

Further evidence against a monoclausal analysis comes from *it*-clefts involving an overt complementizer (151) or *wh*-pronoun (152).

(151) It was her that came.

(152) It was him who telephoned.

Meinunger (1998: 287) argues that the complementizer *that* appears as the head of a functional projection between the focus and TP. However, there is little independent evidence for assuming that *that* could occupy such a low position in the C-system. As mentioned in Section 4.1.2 (footnotes 8 & 15), evidence from embedded topicalisation (153) and left-dislocation (154) suggests that the complementizer does not head the functional projection immediately dominating TP, because it precedes rather than follows the topicalised/left-dislocated constituent (155).[75]

(153) Example illustrating that the complementizer *that* must precede a topicalised constituent in an embedded clause[76]

a. Larry believed that, **his allowance**, they would surely cut.
b. * Larry believed, **his allowance**, that they would surely cut.
(Potsdam 1998: 325)

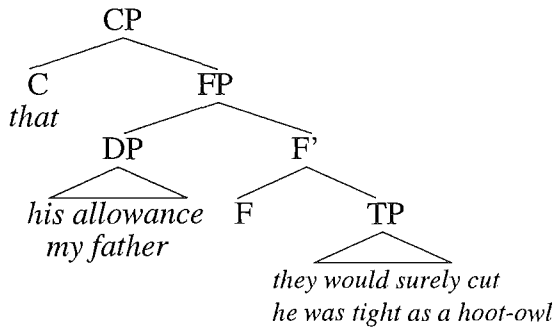
(154) Example illustrating that the complementizer *that* must precede a left-dislocated constituent in an embedded clause

a. I said that **my father**, he was tight as a hoot-owl.
b. * I said, **my father**, that he was tight as a hoot-owl.
(Ross 1986 [1967]: 255; Anagnostopoulou 1997: 167)

[75] As Potsdam (1998: 325) points out, we could analyse topicalised constituents as TP-adjuncts (which would then allow us to analyse *that* as heading the lowest functional projection dominating TP). However, such an analysis seems much less plausible for left-dislocated constituents (cf. Anagnostopoulou 1997: 167f).

[76] The topicalised/focused constituent is highlighted in bold, and the complementizer is underlined.

(155) Tree diagram illustrating the relative position of the complementizer *that* and topicalised or left-dislocated constituents in an embedded clause



What is more, *it*-clefts involving *that* may be preceded by another instance of *that* in embedded contexts (156).

(156) I knew [that it was him that wanted out].

If we want to retain a monoclausal analysis of *it*-clefts, we will only be able to account for examples like (156), if we assume that the complementizer is base-generated in the lower position and then copied to clause-initial position, with both copies spelled out. Such an analysis seems rather implausible, given that the cooccurrence of two copies of a complementizer within the same clause does not seem to be possible in any other constructions.

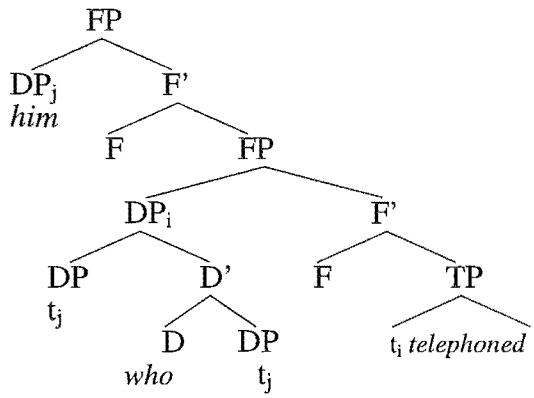
A monoclausal analysis is even more problematic when the clause in the cleft is introduced by a *wh*-pronoun (157).

(157) It was **him** [who telephoned].

Since the *wh*-pronoun itself is linked to the gap in the clause, we will only be able to maintain a monoclausal analysis of the construction if we assume that the focus constituent is base-generated as the complement of the *wh*-pronoun in the *wh*-phrase, and subsequently raises out of this position to the specifier of the higher functional head (158).[77]

[77] Compare Kayne's (1994: 87-90, 110f) analysis of headed relatives involving overt *wh*-pronouns (cf. Section 3.8.2 for details), and his suggestion that clefts with *wh*-words could be analysed along the same lines.

(158) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic relation between the focus and the *wh*-pronoun that would be required to maintain a monoclausal analysis of *it*-clefts involving an overt *wh*-pronoun

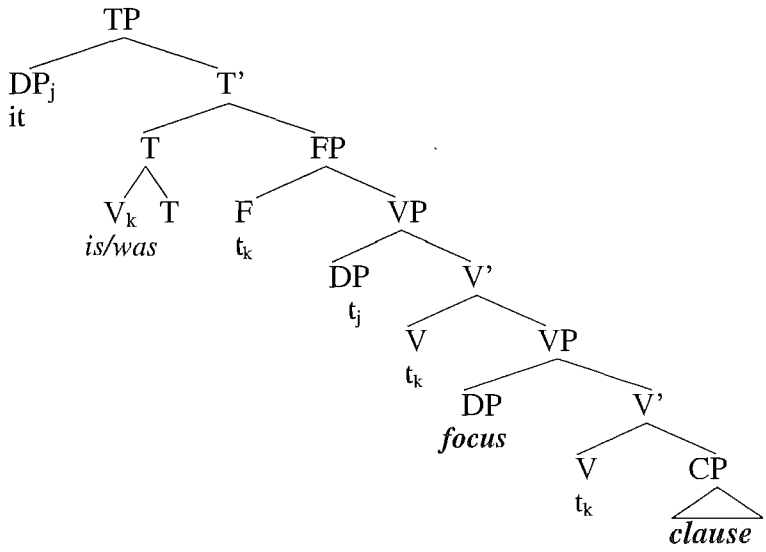


Such an analysis is rather problematic, because it forces us to stipulate that a D filled by a *wh*-pronoun may take a DP complement, while other Ds can only take NumP complements.

I would therefore like to propose that *it*-clefts in Present-Day English generally have the structure in (159), where the focus appears as the lower argument of identificational *be*, and the clause is base-generated as an adverbial-like complement of V.[78]

[78] See Delahunty (1982) for arguments in favour of assuming that the clause in an *it*-cleft is base-generated in its surface position rather than extraposed or dislocated from a noun phrase headed by *it*, as suggested by Akmajian (1970) and Gundel (1977).

(159) Tree diagram illustrating a biclausal analysis of *it*-clefts, where the focus is analysed as the lower argument of identificational *be*, and the clause is base-generated as a complement of V



This analysis not only correctly predicts the increasing preference for objective pronoun forms in the focus of *it*-clefts, but also allows us to capture the similarities in the diachronic development of *it*-clefts and *it BE* sentences,[79] and the parallels between cleft clauses and restrictive relatives:[80]

As the lower argument of *be*, the focus pronoun will be linked to objective Arg-Case. Since it appears in [Spec, VP] rather than [Spec, *v*P] at Spell-Out, the focus pronoun will be unable to check objective Pos-Case, but it will be influenced by the Def-Case constraint, which also calls for objective pronoun forms. The absence of Pos-Case checking means that the focus pronoun will be more susceptible to additional case and non-case influences on pronoun form than object pronouns in [Spec, *v*P].

The occurrence of verb agreement with a consistently nominative focus constituent in Chaucer's work (160), indicates that in Late Middle English the focus was still analysed as the higher argument of *be* (161), and therefore received nominative Arg-Case and triggered subject Arg-Agreement on the verb.[81]

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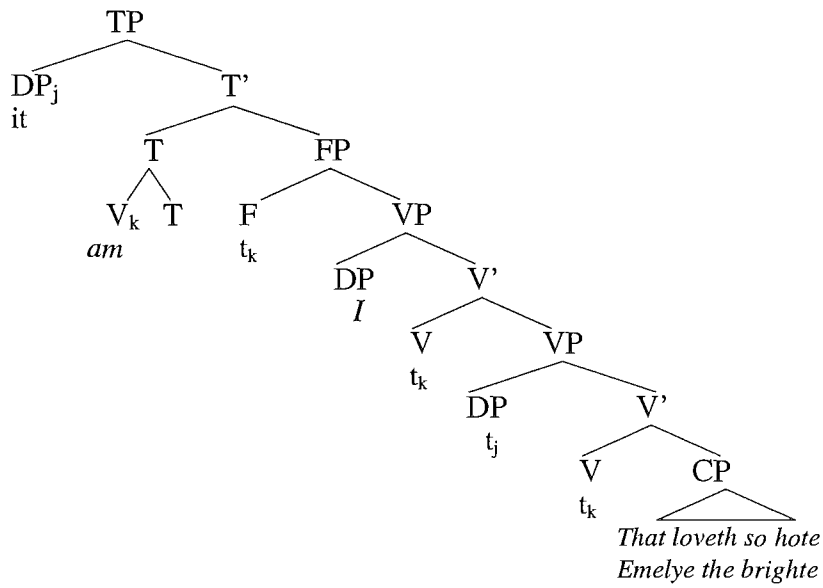
[79] Cf. Visser (1963: 41), Gelderen (1997: 149-151, 157).

[80] See Ball (1994) for empirical evidence that use of relative pronouns and complementizers in cleft clauses has undergone the same diachronic changes as the use of relative pronouns and complementizers in restrictive relatives.

[81] See Sections 4.5.1.2 and 4.5.2.1 for a more detailed discussion of Arg-Agreement and historical changes in *it BE* sentences. In the absence of independent evidence for verb movement to C in identificational sentences (cf. Section 4.5.2.1, footnote 62), I am assuming that a postverbal focus in

(160) and it <u>am</u> I That loveth so hote Emelye the brighte.
(Chaucer, *Knight's Tale*: 1736-7) [Gelderen 1997]

(161) Tree diagram illustrating the structure of *it*-clefts in the Late Middle English period



The similarities between cleft clauses and restrictive relatives can be argued to arise from the fact that both are non-argument CPs containing a variable (i.e. an empty operator or a *wh*-pronoun) that must be bound by an antecedent at LF (cf. Delahunty 1982: 213-224). In view of the importance of Relativised Minimality (162) in antecedent-government (cf. Rizzi 1990: 1-27), we might expect that the open position in the clause will tend to be bound by the closest available overt antecedent.[82]

(162) Relativized Minimality as defined for antecedent-goverment
(cf. Rizzi 1990: 7)

X antecedent-governs Y only if there is no Z such that
(i) Z is a typical potential antecedent-governor for Y
(ii) Z c-commands Y and does not c-command X

---

it-clefts always occupies its VP-internal base position.

[82] See Delahunty (1982: 93) for the suggestion that 'the semantics operate compositionally upon the structure provided by the syntax', and Rizzi (1990: 15ff) for evidence that the construal of a focus constituent with the clause in an *it*-cleft is indeed subject to Relativised Minimality.

In *it*-clefts with a pronominal focus, the closest suitable antecedent for the variable in the clause will always be the focus pronoun, because *it* raises to TP before Spell-Out. As a result, it will be the focus pronoun that binds the open position in the clause. Since the construal of the focus with the clause effectively links the focus to a position on the argument hierarchy of a predicate in the clause, we might expect a focus pronoun to be able to inherit the Arg-Case linked to that position.[83] If we assume that the Arg-Case inherited from the clause may override the Arg-Case assigned to the focus pronoun by *be*, the proposed analysis will correctly predict that focus pronouns in subject clefts should be more likely to surface in the nominative case than focus pronouns in non-subject clefts.

While the interaction of matrix Arg-Case and inherited Arg-Case can account for the occurrence of both nominative and objective pronoun forms in the focus of subject clefts, no purely case-based approach could predict the selection of nominative pronoun forms in clefts where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb or preposition (163).

(163) a. 'Yes, it is **they** [whom she is coming to see]' (Ivy Compton-Burnett, *The present and the past*, (Penguin Books) 1972 [1953]: 31)
[Erdmann 1978: 77]

b. It was **he** [that I played with over Christmas in the Maltings in Edinburgh]
(*ICE-GB*, S1A-058-67) [Wales 1996: 96]

This suggests that the surface form of focus pronouns in *it*-clefts is at least partly determined by factors other than case.

In Chapter 7, I will present further evidence on the distribution of pronoun forms in *it*-clefts, which indicates that the use of non-1sg nominatives in *it*-clefts is encouraged by the asymmetric c-command relationship between the focus and the clause (164).

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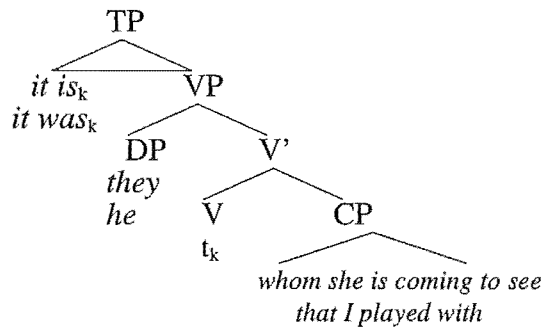
[83] Compare the potential effects of Discourse Inference on the Arg-Case of an independent pronoun (cf. Section 4.4.2).

(164) Tree diagram illustrating the asymmetric c-command relationship between the focus and the clause in identificational *it*-clefts



4.6 Pronoun case in V-*ing* constructions

As Abney (1987: 212f) and Jespersen (1946: 116) point out, Modern English V-*ing* constructions derive from two different sources:

(a) strictly nominal gerunds, which were originally marked with the suffix *-ung*, and did not permit direct objects or adverbs; the subject of such a gerund always appeared in the genitive case (just like the possessive in a noun phrase)

and

(b) strictly verbal present participle constructions marked with the suffix *-end(e)/-ind(e)*

The phonological distinction between the nominal suffix *-ung* and the present participle suffix *-end(e)/-ind(e)* became neutralised during the Middle English period, when both of the suffixes started to be realised as *-ing*. The loss of the phonological distinction between the affixes 'paved the way for the "mixing" of the verbal properties of the participle and the nominal properties of the gerund' (Abney 1987: 213; cf. also Jespersen 1946: 116). In the mid-15th century we find the first evidence for 'mixed' gerunds, i.e. gerunds where the verb is followed by a direct object (165).

(165) Example of a gerund where a genitive subject (nominal property) cooccurs with a direct object (verbal property)

> You must excuse [**my** telling <u>you</u>] (Charles Dickens, *Our mutual friend*, London 1912 (Nelson) [1865]: 28) [Jespersen 1946: 148]

By the end of the 16th century, the gerund appears with aspect (166) and voice distinctions (167).

(166) Example of a gerund containing perfective *have*

There is no record of [**his** ever having lost his temper] (Stacy Aumonier, *Olga Bardel*, London 1916: 74) [Jespersen 1946: 111]

(167) Example of a passive gerund

which ... was the cause of [**his** being taken in the middle of the night out of his bed] (Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy and A sentimental journey*, (Macmillan), London 1911: 1. 110) [Jespersen 1946: 115]

According to Blume, a grammarian quoted by Jespersen (1946: 110), the use of *not* with the gerund (168) also starts around Elizabethan times.

(168) Example of a gerund containing *not*

knowing that [**his** not replying] would only infuriate the magistrate more (Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*: 81) [Jespersen 1946: 111]

While pronominal subjects of gerunds in argument position (165)-(168) consistently surface in the genitive up until the 19th century, absolutive V-*ing* constructions only ever permitted objective or nominative subjects (169).

(169) Examples of absolutive V-*ing* constructions

a. Maybe the dominie can clear it up, [**him** being a scholar] (James M. Barrie, *The little minister*, London 1893: 118) [Jespersen 1946: 49]

b. For, [**he** being dead], with him is beautie slaine (William Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis*: 1019) [Jespersen 1934 [1924]: 128]

According to Jespersen (1946: 45), absolutive V-*ing* constructions have their origin in translations from Latin, and are rare in Old English and Middle English. The subject of the construction was originally dative, in imitation of the Latin ablative, but with the loss of case distinctions in the (pro)nominal paradigms (cf. Chapter 1), nominative subjects became increasingly popular (Jespersen 1946: 46). While noting that the nominative and dative appear to have been 'used concurrently for some time' in the earlier texts, Jespersen (1946: 48f) argues that the current variation between nominative and objective forms in absolutive V-*ing*

'is not a continuation of the old practice, but is due to the general dislocation of the feeling of cases'.

4.6.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

In Present-Day English, the case of a pronoun appearing as the subject of a V-*ing* construction still depends in part on the position and function of the V-*ing* construction in the overall sentence.

When the V-*ing* construction appears as the complement of a verb a lone pronominal subject may surface either in the genitive (170) or in the objective case (171), but not in the nominative (172).

(170) Examples illustrating the occurrence of genitive subject pronouns in V-*ing* constructions appearing as the complement of a verb

a. You won't mind [**my** taking Blanche in to dinner]
(George Bernard Shaw, *Misalliance, The dark lady, Fanny's first play*, London 1914: 1.20) [Jespersen 1946: 147]

b. take measures to prevent [**our** ever meeting again] (Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*, London 1900 (Macmillan) [1839]: 726) [Jespersen 1946: 110]

(171) Examples illustrating the occurrence of objective subject pronouns in V-*ing* constructions appearing as the complement of a verb

a. you wouldn't mind [**me** asking you about her] (Arnold Bennett, *Riceyman Steps*, Tauchnitz ed. 1924 [1923]: 15) [Jespersen 1946: 147]

b. to prevent [**him** making a fool of himself] (Anthony Hope [Hawkins], *Father Stafford*, London 1900 (6d.ed.): 83) [Jespersen 1946: 149]

c. You don't mind [**us** having secrets]? (W.B. Maxwell, *We forget because we must*, Tauchnitz ed., [1928]: 88) [Jespersen 1946: 147]

d. She didn't like [**them** taking notice of me] (W.B. Maxwell, *Fernande*, Tauchnitz ed., 1926: 196) [Jespersen 1946: 147]

(172) a. * You won't mind [**I** taking Blanche to dinner]

b. * to prevent [**he** making a fool of himself]

c. * She didn't like [**they** taking notice of me]

While lone subject pronouns in object V-*ing* constructions never occur in the nominative (172), nominatives do sometimes appear when the subject is coordinated (173).

(173) Examples illustrating the occurrence of nominative pronoun forms in a coordinate appearing as the subject of an V-*ing* construction in object position

a. I recollect [[Pegotty and **I**] peeping out at them from my little window] (Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, London 1897 (Macmillan) [1849-50]: 21) [Jespersen 1946: 135]

b. Do you ever hear [[your mother and **I**] scrapping and fussing like that]? (Sinclair Lewis, *Martin Arrowsmith*, London 1926 [1925]: 161) [Jespersen 1946: 135]

In absolutive V-*ing* constructions a pronominal subject may surface either in its nominative (174) or objective form (175), but never in the genitive (176).

(174) Examples illustrating the occurrence of nominative subject pronouns in absolutive V-*ing* constructions

a. But, my good Master Bates dying in two years after, and [**I** having few friends], my business began to fail (Jonathan Swift, *Works*, Dublin 1785: 3.2) [Jespersen 1946: 48]

b. For, [**thou** betraying me], I doe betray My nobler part (Shakespeare, Sonnet 151: 5) [Jespersen 1946: 50]

c. the little picture of Ashe and Lady Kiddy together - [**he** bending over her in his large, handsome geniality] and [**she** looking up] (Mrs. Humphrey Ward, *The marriage of William Ashe*, London (Nelson) [1905]: 36) [Jespersen 1946: 46]

d. and [**we** having fed them the instant they entered the room], they bowed and smiled (Henry Fielding, *Works*, 2nd ed., London 1762: 4.17) [Jespersen 1946: 46]

e. perch ... [**they** being - like the wicked of the world, not afraid] (Izaak Walton, *The compleat angler*, London 1653: 151) [Jespersen 1946: 48]

(175) Examples illustrating the occurrence of objective subject pronouns in absolutive V-*ing* constructions

a. If I'd shut my mouth, absolutely they'd have used that to support their story [**me** being a very large holder of North Atlantics] (Arnold Bennett, *Imperial palace*, London 1930: 260) [Jespersen 1946: 49]

b. But you see, [**him** being here, in the room] - I had to be careful (Arnold Bennett, *Lord Raingo*, London 1926: 140) [Jespersen 1946: 49]

c. why didn't you say so before? and [**us** losing our time listening to your silliness]! (George Bernard Shaw, *Androcles and the lion*, London 1916: 113) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 374]

(176) a. * [**my** having few friends], my business began to fail

b. * But you see, [**his** being here, in the room] - I had to be careful

c. * and [**our** losing our time listening to your silliness]!

When the V-*ing* construction appears as the subject of a clause or the complement of a preposition, the pronominal subject of the V-*ing* construction itself may appear either in the genitive (177)-(178), or in the objective (179)-(180), or in the nominative case (181)-(182).

(177) Examples illustrating the occurrence of genitive subject pronouns in V-*ing* constructions appearing as the subject of a clause

a. [**his** being a prisoner here], renders it impossible (Charles Dickens, *Pickwick Papers*, London 1890 (Chapman & Hall) [1837f]: 498) [Jespersen 1946: 101]

b. It cannot be wondered at that [**their** retiring all to sleep at so unusual an hour] should excite his curiosity (Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*, London 1782 [1749]: 3.71) [Jespersen 1946: 128]

(178) Examples illustrating the occurrence of genitive subject pronouns in V-*ing* constructions appearing as the complement of a preposition

a. without [**my** ever offering to pluck them] (Charles Lamb, *The essays of Elia*, London 1899 (Dent): 1. 184) [Jespersen 1946: 110]

b. it all depended on [**your** naturally liking me] (George Bernard Shaw, *Plays pleasant*, London 1898: 272) [Jespersen 1946: 101]

c. there could be no serious objection to [**his** doing formally what he might do virtually] (Thomas B. Macaulay, *History of England*, Tauchnitz: 1. 30) [Jespersen 1946: 101]

d. the storm may be weathered without [**our** being, any of us, quite overcome] (Jane Austen, *Sense and sensibility*, London [1811]: 260) [Jespersen 1946: 129]

e. the possibility of [**their** ever knowing what had happened] (George Eliot, *Adam Bede*, London 1900 [1859]: 289) [Jespersen 1946: 101]

(179) Example illustrating the occurrence of objective subject pronouns in V-*ing* constructions appearing as the subject of a clause

[**Him** hanging around like this, just messing things up], don't fit in anywheres that I can see. (Dashiell Hammett, *The thin man*, London 1934: 252) [Jespersen 1946: 139]

(180) Examples illustrating the occurrence of objective subject pronouns in V-*ing* constructions appearing as the complement of a preposition

a. to think of [**me** kissing Mr. H.] after all he's done to me (Rudyard Kipling, *The light that failed*, (Engl. Libr.) [1890]: 238) [Jespersen 1946: 134]

b. There's a talk of [**him** getting a knighthood shortly] (William Pett Ridge, *96 Birnam Road*, London 1907: 135) [Jespersen 1946: 134]

c. you say nothing about [**us** calling] (Arnold Bennett, *Clayhanger*, Tauchnitz ed., 1912 [1910]: 2.79) [Jespersen 1946: 134]

d. there could be no harm in [**them** walking together] (William Hazlitt, *Liber amoris*, (Routledge) [1823]: 121) [Jespersen 1946: 133]

(181) Examples illustrating the occurrence of nominative subject pronouns in V-*ing* constructions appearing as the subject of a clause

a. [**I** having a great esteem for your honour and a better opinion of you than any of the quality], makes me acquaint you of an affair that I hope will oblige you to know
(Addison, etc, *The spectator*, ed. Morley, London 1888: 394)
[Jespersen 1946: 138]

b. [**They** being her relations, too], made it so much the worse.
(Jane Austen, *Sense and sensibility*, London [1811]: 120)
[Jespersen 1946: 138]

(182) Examples illustrating the occurrence of nominative subject pronouns in V-*ing* constructions appearing as the complement of a preposition

a. Instead of [**he** converting the Zulus], the Zulu chief converted him
(utterance overheard by Jespersen) [Jespersen (1934 [1924]: 141]

b. I should be his prisoner instead of [**he** being mine]
(Arthur Conan Doyle, *Strand Magazine*, December 1894: 571)
[Jespersen (1934 [1924]: 141]

4.6.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

Abney (1987: 167f) distinguishes argumental gerunds from participial V-*ing* constructions.

Participial V-*ing* constructions, which include absolutive V-*ing*, have purely verbal characteristics, and are thus best analysed as containing only verbal projections. The occurrence of perfective *have* in absolutive V-*ing* constructions (183) suggests that participial V-*ing* is temporally independent and contains a TP-layer.[84]

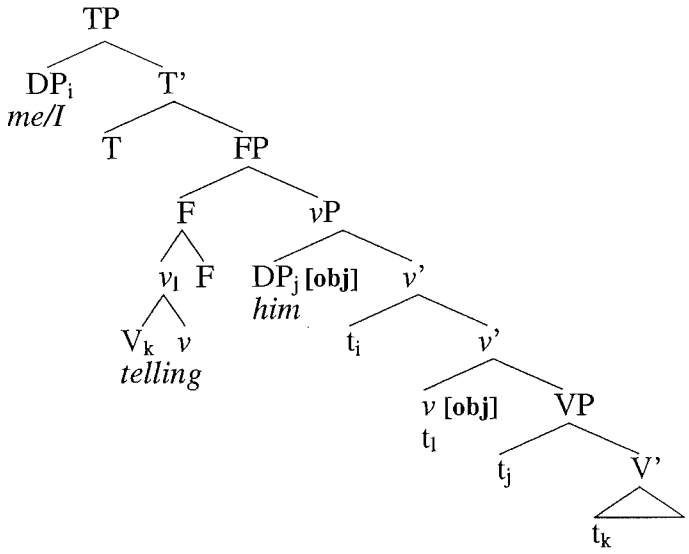
(183) and [**we** having fed them the instant they entered the room], they bowed and smiled (Henry Fielding, *Works*, 2nd ed., London 1762: 4.17)
[Jespersen 1946: 46]

At the same time, the absence of consistent nominative case marking on pronominal subjects of absolutive V-*ing* indicates that participial *-ING* fails to project the CP-layer required for nominative Pos-Case checking (cf.

[84] See Wurmbrand (2001: 100f) for a more detailed discussion of the link between temporal independence and the presence of a TP-layer.

Section 2.2.2.2). I will therefore assume that V-*ing* constructions in absolutive position have the structure given in (184).

(184) Tree diagram illustrating the structure and Pos-Case properties of V-*ing* constructions in absolutive position



In the proposed analysis, an object of the verb will check objective Pos-Case in [Spec, *v*P], and will also receive objective Arg-Case. In the absence of a CP-layer, the subject will be unable to undergo Pos-Case checking, and will instead be influenced by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective forms in all positions not covered by Pos-Case. Since the subject is the highest argument of the verb, it will also receive nominative Arg-Case. The variation between nominative and objective subjects in absolutive V-*ing* constructions could thus be argued to arise from competition between the Arg-Case constraint and the Def-Case constraint.[85] However, since Arg-Case would appear to be more influential than Def-Case in most varieties of Present-Day English (cf. Section 3.3.2), the interaction of Arg-Case and Def-Case alone cannot account for increasing popularity of objective pronoun forms in this context. This suggests that the form of subject pronouns absolutive V-*ing* constructions is at least partly influenced by non-case factors, most notably the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them.*

According to Abney (1987: 223f), V-*ing* constructions in argument position are DPs, and the case of the subject in a V-*ing* gerund depends on the adjunction

[85] Compare Jespersen's (1934 [1924]: 128) observation that the nominative came to be used in non-finite clauses because of the association between subjects and nominative case. Jespersen (1934 [1924]: 128) points out that similar developments can be found in a range of Indo-European languages, and notes that 'In English the nominative has prevailed in the standard language'.

site for the abstract morpheme *-ING*, which adds the categorical feature [+ N] to the projection it attaches to:

In V-*ing* gerunds with genitive subjects (Poss-*ing* gerunds), *-ING* adjoins to VP and turns it into an NP. Since this NP is dominated by a complete DP-layer, the subject of the gerund will be able to raise to [Spec, DP] before Spell-Out, and check genitive case there.

In V-*ing* gerunds with objective or nominative subjects (Acc-*ing* gerunds), *-ING* adjoins to IP and turns it into a DP.[86] Since the construction does not contain a D, the subject remains within IP and is not able to check genitive case.

As discussed in Section 2.2.2.3, Abney's (1987) approach to argumental gerunds needs to be modified if it is to fit in with current assumptions about phrase structure: [87] Since *-ING* behaves like a functional head, it should be assigned a consistent category and complementation. The ready occurrence of perfective *have* in Poss-*ing* (185a) as well as Acc-*ing* gerunds (185b), suggests that both Poss-*ing* and Acc-*ing* gerunds are temporally independent and contain a TP-layer.

(185) a. There is no record of [**his** ever <u>having</u> lost his temper].
b. There is no record of [**him** ever <u>having</u> lost his temper].

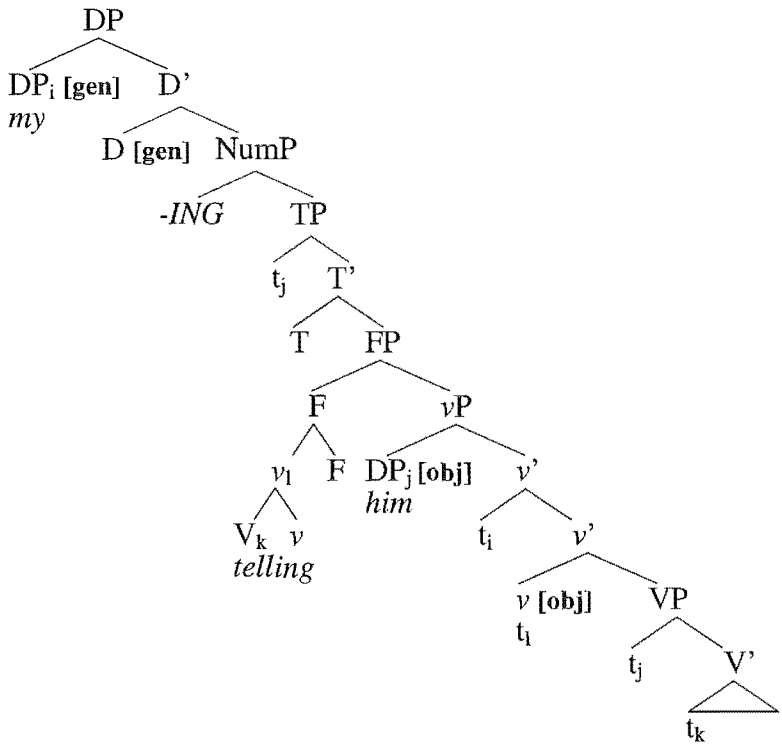
I will therefore follow Kate Kearns (p.c.) in assuming that *-ING* has the category Num in argumental V-*ing* constructions, and always takes a TP as its complement. The difference between Poss-*ing* and Acc-*ing* arises from the optional projection of a DP-layer, which is present in Poss-*ing* gerunds (186), but absent in Acc-*ing* gerunds (cf. (187)-(188) below).

---

[86] Note that Abney's (1987) IP is equivalent to TP in the approach adopted in this thesis.

[87] I would like to thank Kate Kearns (p.c.) for drawing my attention to the issues discussed here and for suggesting the subsequent analysis.

(186) Tree diagram illustrating the structure and Pos-Case properties of Poss-*ing* gerunds



In the proposed analysis, both subject and object pronouns in a Poss-*ing* gerund will be able to enter into Pos-Case checking: The subject will check genitive Pos-Case in [Spec, DP], and the object will check objective Pos-Case in [Spec, *v*P]. Since the subject is the highest argument of the verb, it will also receive nominative Arg-Case, while the object will be linked to objective Arg-Case. As discussed in detail in Chapter 2, the selection of genitive rather than nominative pronoun subjects in Poss-*ing* gerunds indicates that Pos-Case overrides Arg-Case in Present-Day English.

When *-ING* fails to project a DP-layer, the subject of the V-*ing* construction will be unable to check genitive Pos-Case, and an Acc-*ing* gerund results. Since T requires the presence of a CP-layer to be able to enter into Pos-Case checking, the subject of an Acc-*ing* gerund will also be unable to check nominative Pos-Case.[88]

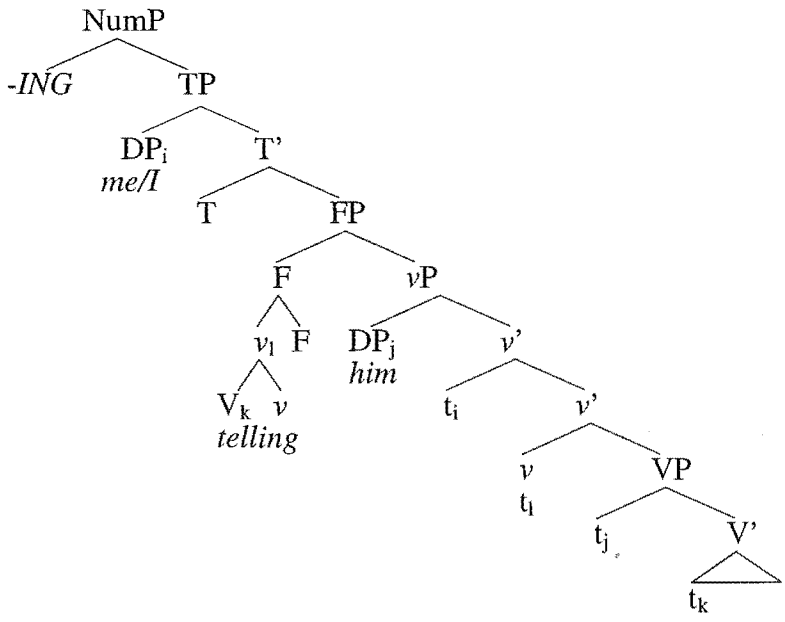
When the Acc-*ing* gerund appears as the subject of a clause or the complement of a preposition, the subject of the gerund will remain within the TP throughout the derivation (187). Since the subject is unable to check Pos-Case

[88] As discussed in Section 2.2.2.2, T will check nominative Pos-Case on a noun phrase in [Spec, TP], if C is [+ finite], and objective Pos-Case if C is [- finite] and filled by *for*.

within the gerund, its surface form will be influenced by the Arg-Case constraint, which requires the subject to be nominative, and the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective forms.

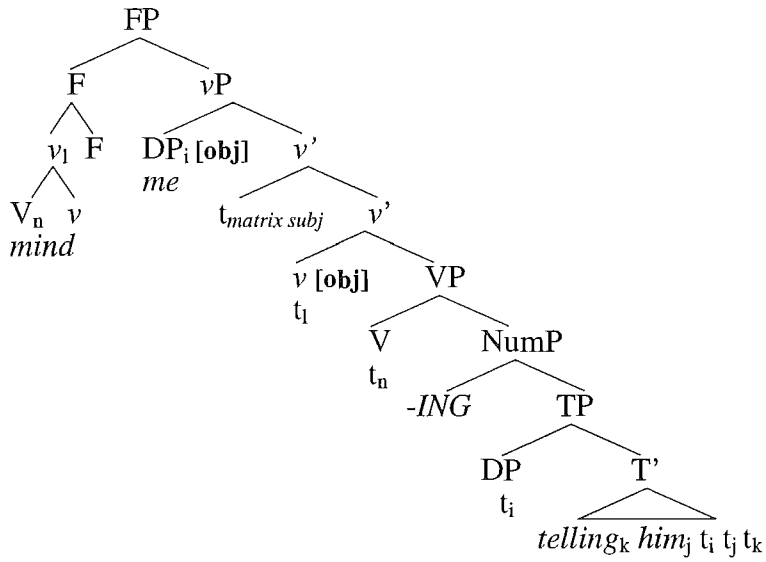
As with absolutive V-*ing* constructions, the occurrence of both nominative and objective subjects in gerunds that appear as the subject of a clause or complement of a preposition (cf. (179)-(182)), could be argued to arise from the interaction of Arg-Case, Def-Case, and the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them* in strong pronoun contexts.

(187) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of the subject pronoun in Acc-*ing* gerunds appearing as the subject of a clause or complement of a preposition



When the Acc-*ing* construction appears as the complement of a verb, the subject will be able to raise out of the gerund, into the specifier of the *v*P projected by the matrix verb (188).

(188) Tree diagram illustrating objective Pos-Case checking on a pronoun that functions as the subject of an Acc-*ing* construction in verbal complement position



Since the subject of the gerund occupies [Spec, *v*P] in the matrix clause at Spell-Out, it will receive objective Pos-Case as well as nominative Arg-Case. Unlike the competition between Arg-Case and Def-Case, the competition between Pos-Case and Arg-Case does not appear to lead to variation. As discussed in Section 4.6.1, lone pronominal subjects of gerunds verbal complement position may only surface in the objective or genitive case, which can be seen as further evidence that Pos-Case overrides Arg-Case in Present-Day English.

The possible occurrence of nominative pronoun forms in coordinated subjects of Acc-*ing* gerunds in the same context, could be seen as evidence that coordinates may remain within the gerund throughout the derivation, even when the gerund appears as the complement of a verb.[89] If a coordinated subject appears in a gerund-internal position at Spell-Out, the conjoined pronouns will have the same case status as subjects of absolutive gerunds and gerunds appearing as the subject of a clause or complement of a preposition. We would therefore expect them to surface either in the nominative or in the objective case.

As can be seen from (189)-(190), Poss-*ing* and Acc-*ing* gerunds may appear in virtually identical environments within the same texts. This suggests that the

[89] As discussed in Section 4.3.2, the information-structure properties of coordinates are different from the information-structure properties of lone pronouns, so we might expect coordinates to be able to remain within the gerund while lone pronouns have to raise to [Spec, *v*P].

structural analyses associated with Acc-*ing* and Poss-*ing* gerunds are simultaneously available to speakers of Modern English, and do not necessarily have different semantic properties.

(189) Who ever heard of [**them** eating an owl or a fox], madam, or [**their** sitting down and taking a crow to pick] (William M. Thackeray, *The Newcomes*, London 1901 [1853]: 2) [Jespersen 1946: 146]

(190) I should not mind [**their** talking about me] (1.267)
I should not mind [**them** saying that] (1.269)
(William Black, *The princes of Thule*, Tauchnitz ed. [1873]: 1.267 & 269)
[Jespersen 1946: 147]

4.7 Pronoun case in *to*-infinitives

4.7.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

Like V-*ing* constructions, *to*-infinitives with overt subjects may occur either in argument position or as an absolutive or independent constituent. What sets *to*-infinitives apart from V-*ing* constructions in Present-Day English, is their ability to contain the overt complementizer *for*.[90]

This complementizer seems to occur only in *to*-infinitives that function as the argument of a verbal predicate, and when it is present, a (lone) pronominal subject always surfaces in the objective case (191)-(192).

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[90] As Harris & Campbell (1995: 62) point out, *for* started out as a preposition preceding a noun phrase that belonged to the matrix clause and controlled the empty subject of a following non-finite clause (i).

(i) [it is bet for me] [to sleen my self than ben defouled thus]
'It is better for me to slay myself than to be violated thus'
(Chaucer; cited from Ebert 1978: 12) [Harris & Campbell 1995: 62]

During the Early Modern English period, the noun phrase complement of *for* came to be reanalysed as the subject of the non-finite clause, and *for* was reanalysed as a complementizer. This reanalysis of the preposition meant that *for* could now also occur with *to*-infinitives appearing as the subject of a finite clause (cf. (192)).

(191) Examples illustrating the case of subject pronouns in *to*-infinitives introduced by *for*, where the infinitive appears as the complement of a verb

a. I hardly know in what language you would choose [for **me** to reply] (Arthur W. Pinero, *The benefit of the doubt*, London 1895: 235) [Jespersen 1946: 301]

b. She wouldn't like [for **him** to know anything] (Compton Mackenzie, *Sinister Street*, London 1913-14: 1103) [Jespersen 1946: 301]

c. I couldn't bear [for **us** not to be friends] (Hugh Walpole, *The silver thorn*, Tauchnitz 1928: 107) [Jespersen 1946: 301]

(192) Examples illustrating the case of subject pronouns in *to*-infinitives introduced by *for*, where the infinitive appears as subject of a finite clause

a. [for **me** to dispute that] would be all as one, as for you to dispute the management of a pack of dogs (Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*, London 1782 [1749]: 4.95) [Jespersen 1946: 312]

b. [For **him** to win the race] would be unexpected.

c. [For **vs** to leuy power Proportionate to th'enemy] is all impossible (Shakespeare, *Richard II*: II. ii. 123) [Jespersen 1946: 311]

When the complementizer is absent and the *to*-infinitive appears as the complement of a verb, (lone) subject pronouns are obligatorily objective (193). In absolutive and independent *to*-inifinitives, on the other hand, a lone subject pronoun may surface either in its nominative or objective form (194)-(195).

(193) Examples illustrating the case of subject pronouns in *to*-infinitives without *for*, when the *to*-infinitive appears as the complement of a matrix verb

a. our neighbours did take [**me** to be a very goodly man] (John Bunyan, *Grace abounding, etc.*, ed. Brown, Cambridge 1907: 14) [Jespersen 1946: 282]

b. I believed [**thee** to be too solemn] (Alfred Tennyson, *Poetical works*, London 1894: 806) [Jespersen 1946: 282]

c. I judged [**him** to be about sixty years of age] (George Gissing, *The house of cobwebs*, London 1914 (Constable): 48) [Jespersen 1946: 282]

d. Poirot motioned [**her** to sit down] (Agatha Christie, *Murder on the Orient Express*: 149) [Jespersen 1946: 292]

e. I know [**them** to bee as true bred cowards as euer turn'd backe] (William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 1*: I. ii. 205) [Jespersen 1946: 283]

(194) Examples illustrating the occurrence of nominative subjects in absolutive and independent *to*-infinitives

a. And [**I** to sigh for her, to watch for her, to pray for her] (Shakespeare, *Love's labour's lost*: III. 202) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

b. What? A beggar! a slave! and [**he** to deprave and abuse the virtue of tobacco]! (Ben Jonson) [Jespersen 1934 [1924]: 130]

c. we divided it: [**he** to speak to the Spaniards] and I to the English (Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 1719 (Facsimile ed. London 1883): 2.194) [Jespersen 1946: 322]

(195) Examples illustrating the occurrence of objective subjects in absolutive and independent *to*-infinitives

a. [**Me** to sing to naked men]! (Rudyard Kipling, *The second Jungle Book*, Tauchnitz, 1897 [1895]: 72) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

b. 'Oh - [**me** to come asking him for death] and [**him** to give me back my life instead].' (Lehmann, *The echoing grove*, : 319) [Erdmann 1978: 71]

To-infinitives in sentential subject position that contain an overt subject rarely occur without *for* in Present-Day English, but Jespersen (1934 [1924] & 1946) provides a few examples from earlier texts, which suggest that a lone subject pronoun tended to surface in the nominative case in these contexts (196).

(196) Examples illustrating the case of subject pronouns in *to*-infinitives without *for*, when the *to*-infinitive appears as subject of a finite clause

a. [**I** to beare this, that neuer knew but better], is some burthen (Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*: IV. iii. 266) [Jespersen 1946: 307]

b. [**Thow** to lye by our moder] is to muche shame for vs to suffre (Thomas Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*, ed. O. Sommer, London 1889: 453) [Jespersen 1946: 307]

c. [**She** to be his], were hardly less absurd Than that he took her name into his mouth (Robert Browning, *Poetical works*, London 1896) [Jespersen 1934 [1924]: 130]

4.7.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

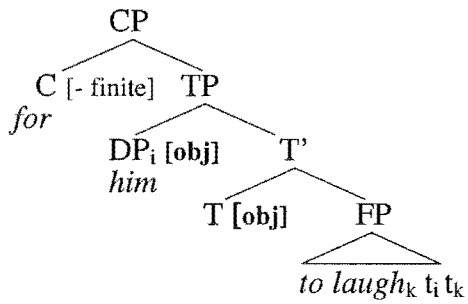
Since the subject of a *to*-infinitive is always the highest argument of the verb, the Arg-Case constraint would predict that all infinitive subjects should consistently surface in the nominative case, regardless of the syntactic position of the infinitive and the presence versus absence of the complementizer *for*. This suggests that the occurrence of objective subjects in *to*-infinitives must be due to influence from the Pos-Case and Def-Case constraint.

As Wurmbrand (2001) demonstrates in great detail, there are good reasons to assume that not all infinitives project the same number of functional layers above the verb phrase.

To-infinitives introduced by the complementizer *for* are clearly CPs with the subject in [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out (197). The obligatory selection of objective pronoun forms in this context suggests that the presence of the complementizer *for* endows T with the ability to check objective Pos-Case on a pronoun in its specifier.[91]

[91] See Section 2.2.2.2, footnote 45, for a possible alternative analysis of Pos-Case checking in *to*-infinitives, which builds on Kayne's treatment of complementizers as probes, and assumes that the subject pronoun raises to the specifier of the functional projection headed by *for*, to check objective case (cf. Kayne 2000: 314-326 and Kayne 2001).

(197) Tree diagram illustrating the internal structure and Pos-Case properties of *to*-infinitives introduced by the complementizer *for*[92]



To-infinitives without an overt complementizer are generally analysed as lacking a CP-layer (198).[93]

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[92] As discussed in Section 2.2.2.2, footnote 46, the infinitival marker *to* is best analysed as occupying a position lower than T at Spell-Out, because unlike a finite auxiliary, *to* must follow *not* if *not* is to be interpreted as negating the whole clause (cf. Law 2000: 172-177; Wurmbrand 2001: 114).

[93] Wurmbrand (2001: 100f) suggests that the presence of a TP-layer can be motivated only for infinitives that permit independent temporal reference (i). If we follow Wurmbrand's (2001) proposal, the subject in infinitives without independent tense properties (ii) will occupy the specifier of a functional head lower than T.

(i) Examples illustrating the temporal independence of the infinitive following *expect*

a. We expected [him to laugh immediately].
b. We expect [him to have finished the painting by this time tomorrow].
c. We expect [him to be perfect for the part in a few years' time]

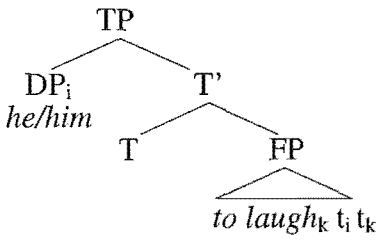
(ii) Examples illustrating the lack of independent temporal reference in *to*-infinitives following the verb *consider*

a. We consider [him to be a fool].
b. We consider [that he has been a fool for far too long].
c. * We consider [him to have been a fool for too long].

d. We consider [him to be perfect for the part].
e. We consider [that he'll be perfect for the part in a few years' time].
f. * We consider [you to be perfect for the part in a few years' time]

Since neither T nor any of the lower functional heads above *v*P are able to check Pos-Case in the absence of CP, the lack of a TP layer in *to*-infinitives of the kind illustrated in (ii), will not have any bearing on the case of the subject in the approach proposed here.

(198) Tree diagram illustrating absence of Pos-Case checking in *to*-infinitives that lack an overt complementizer



Since T is only able to enter into Pos-Case checking when C is present, the absence of a CP-layer means that the subject of the infinitive will be unable to check Pos-Case unless it raises to a Pos-Case position in the matrix clause before Spell-Out.

As we will see below, a suitable matrix position is only available when the *to*-infinitive appears as the complement of a verb. This means that Pos-Case checking is not possible for the subjects of absolutive and independent *to*-infinitives, or *to*-infinitives in subject position.

The absence of Pos-Case checking means that the surface form of the subject in these contexts will be determined by the interaction of the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective forms, and the Arg-Case constraint, which requires the subject to be nominative. As mentioned in Section 4.6.2, Arg-Case tends to be more influential than Def-Case in Present-Day English. We would therefore expect to find mainly nominative subjects in independent, absolutive, and subject *to*-infinitives. The data presented in existing studies indicate that such a preference for nominative subjects is indeed found in Early Modern English texts (cf. (194) & (196)). Objective subjects occur primarily in more recent texts (cf. (195)), which could be seen as evidence that the surface form of subjects in *to*-infinitives is increasingly influenced by non-case factors, such as the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them.*

When the *to*-infinitive appears as the complement of a verb, a (lone) subject pronoun must raise to [Spec, *v*P] in the matrix clause, and check objective Pos-Case there (199).[94] Since Pos-Case overrides Arg-Case in Present-Day English, the the subject will invariably surface in its objective case form.

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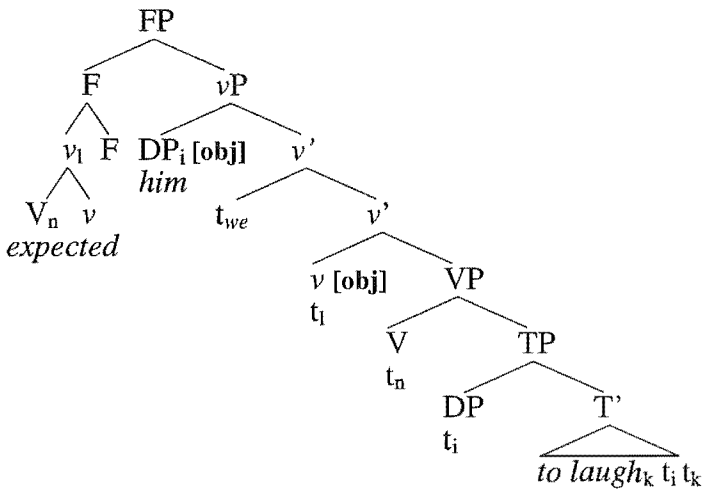
[94] Compare Pos-Case checking on the subject of an Acc-*ing* gerund in verbal complement position (Section 4.6.2).

(199) Case checking on the subject of the embedded clause in the sentence *We expected him to laugh.*[95]



4.8 Pronoun case in small clauses

4.8.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

The distribution of pronoun case forms in small clauses is fairly similar to the distribution of pronoun forms in *to*-infinitives lacking an overt complementizer.

Like *to*-infinitives without *for*, small clauses rarely appear as the subject of a verb or complement of a preposition. When they do, the subject of the small clause tends to surface in the objective case (200), although lone unmodified nominatives may occur in subject small clauses (201).

(200) Examples illustrating the occurrence of objective subject pronouns in small clauses appearing as the subject of finite clause or complement of a preposition

a. [**Him** free] poses a greater risk than [**him** behind bars]. (Aarts 1992: 184)

b. She was distressed at the thought of [**him** alone in New York] (Kayne 1984a: 161 n.28)

c. I would have given half I had in the world for [**him** back again] (Daniel Defoe) [Aarts 1992: 43]

[95] t_{we} = trace of the subject of the matrix clause

(201) Example illustrating the occurrence of nominative subject pronouns in small clauses appearing as the subject of a finite clause

[[**He** in the front seat] and [**she** in the back seat]] would be safer.
(Andrew Radford, p.c.) [Aarts 1992: 185]

In small clauses appearing as the complement of a verb, a lone unmodified subject pronoun will invariably surface in the objective form (202). However, when the subject pronoun appears with a modifier or as part of a coordinate, it may appear in the nominative case (203).

(202) Examples illustrating the case of lone, unmodified subject pronouns in small clauses appearing as the complement of a verb

a. would you have [**me** perjure myself]? (Oliver Goldsmith, Globe ed., London 1889: 623) [Jespersen 1946: 287]

b. They consider [**him** a fool].

c. She had gone of her own free will. Let [**her** find her own way back] (William Somerset Maugham, *Altogether* (Collected stories), London 1934: 1518) [Jespersen 1946: 477]

d. They saw [**us** leave].

e. His inconsiderate behaviour made [**them** angry].

(203) Examples illustrating the possible occurrence of nominative pronoun forms in small clauses appearing as the complement of a verb, when the subject is followed by a modifier or forms part of a coordinate

a. mischeefe which may make [this island Thine owne for ever, and [**I** thy Caliban for aye thy foote-licker]]
(Shakespeare, *The tempest*; IV. i. 217) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 237]

b. Christians fall makes [[Faithful and **he**] go lovingly together]
(John Bunyan, *The pilgrim's progress*, 1st ed., 1678; 85)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 237]

While lone pronominal subjects invariably surface in the objective form when the small clause appears as the complement of a matrix verb, nominatives occur quite readily in independent[96] and absolutive small clauses.[97] As can be seen from the examples in (204)-(210), the case of the subject does not seem to depend on category of the small clause predicate.

(204) Examples illustrating the occurrence of nominative subjects in independent and absolutive small clauses with a nominal predicate

a. Who, I rob? [**I** a theefe]? Not I
(Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 1*: I. ii. 153) [Jespersen 1946: 445]

b. I fail to hold and move One man - and [**he** my cousin], and [**he** my friend] (Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, Tauchnitz [1856]: 154) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 240]

c. [**He** a republican]! He scorned the name. [**He** an enemy of our beloved church]! He esteemed and honoured it. (William M. Thackeray, *The Newcomes*, London 1901 [1853]: 802) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 373]

d. [**She** a beauty]! I should as soon call her mother a wit
(Jane Austen, *Pride and prejudice*, London 1894 [1813]: 333)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

(205) Examples illustrating the occurrence of objective subjects in independent and absolutive small clauses with a nominal predicate

a. that I suld live to be ca'd sae, and [**me** a born servant o' the house o' Tillietudlem!] (Walter Scott, *Old Mortality*, Oxford 1906 [1816]: 59)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 374]

b. It would be a wild, presumptious thing, and [**him** a grand minister!]
(James M. Barrie, *The little minister*, London 1893: 257)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 374]

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[96] Independent small clauses with strongly emotive overtones (i) are generally referred to as Mad Magazine sentences in the literature (cf. Akmajian 1984, Siegel 1987, Schütze 1997).

(i) [Him wear a tuxedo?!] He doesn't even own a clean shirt. (Akmajian 1984: 3)

[97] Jespersen (1934 [1924]: 128) points out that the subjects of absolutive small clauses originally appeared in an oblique case, just like the subjects of absolutive V-*ing* constructions, but this oblique case was eventually replaced with the nominative.

(206) Examples illustrating the case of nominative subjects in independent and absolutive small clauses with an adjectival predicate

a. How can ye chant, ye little birds, And [**I** sae weary fu'o' care!]
(Robert Burns, Centenary edition, Edinburgh 1896: 3.124)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 374]

b. John had seen Glory on the racecourse in Drake's company: [**he** proud and triumphant], [**she** bright and gay and happy]
(Hall Caine, *The Christian*, London 1897: 382) [Jespersen 1946: 47]

c. [**they** dead], two men only would remain (Anthony Hope, *The prisoner of Zenda*, London 1894: 227) [Jespersen 1946: 57]

(207) Examples illustrating the case of objective subjects in independent and absolutive small clauses with an adjectival predicate

a. [**Me** married]? I don't think (Compton Mackenzie, *Carnival,* London 1922 [1912]: 264) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

b. ... admitted the said Joan to the ranks of Venerable and Blessed. - [**Me** venerable]!
(George Bernard Shaw, *Saint Joan*, London 1924: 110)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

(208) Examples illustrating the occurrence of nominative and objective subjects in independent and absolutive small clauses with a prepositional predicate

a. A dead man, and [**I** by]! (Richard B. Sheridan, *Dramatic works*, Tauchnitz: 333) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 374]

b. to bolt with the daughter of an old friend and [**she** only just out of the schoolroom] (William Somerset Maugham, *Plays*, Tauchnitz ed.: 4.289) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 240]

c. We sat in the pub, [**she** at tomato juice] and [**me** with a brown ale]
(Alan Sillitoe, *A start in life*, (Pan Books) 1972 [1970]: 151)
[Erdmann 1978: 69]

d. I'm not going to have any woman rummaging about my house, and [**me** in bed] (Arnold Bennett, *The card*, London 1913 [1911]: 188)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 374]

(209) Examples illustrating the occurrence of nominative subjects in independent and absolutive small clauses with a verbal predicate

a. What? [**I** loue]! [**I** sue]! [**I** seeke a wife]! (Shakespeare, *Love's labour's lost*: III. 191) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

b. [**I** say anything disrespectful of Dr. Kenn?] Heaven forbid! (George Eliot) [Jespersen 1946: 328]

c. The Queen implored pardon ... '[**She** ask my pardon], poor woman!' cried Charles; 'I ask hers with all my heart.' (Thomas B. Macaulay, *History of England*, Tauchnitz: 2.11) [Jespersen 1946: 329]

d. Why! They don't come here to dine you know, they only make believe to dine. [**They** dine here], Law bless you! (William M. Thackeray, *The history of Pendennis*, Tauchnitz [1848-50]: 2.130) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

(210) Examples illustrating the occurrence of objective subjects in independent and absolutive small clauses with a verbal predicate

a. did you dance with her? - [**Me** dance]! says Mr. Barnes (William M. Thackeray, *The Newcomes*, London 1901 [1853]: 171) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

b. What! And [**me** be left all afternoon by myself]? (Arnold Bennett, *Anna of the five towns*, London 1912 [1902]: 175) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239]

c. [**Him** wear a tuxedo]?! He doesn't even own a clean shirt. (Akmajian 1984: 3)

d. What! [**Her** call me up]?! Never. (Akmajian 1984: 3)

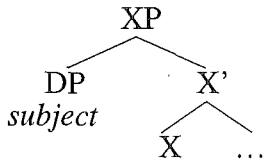
e. What! [**Us** read that trash novel by tomorrow]?! (Akmajian 1984: 3)

4.8.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

Stowell (1981 & 1995) argues that small clauses are (extended) projections of lexical heads, and that the subject of a small clause occupies the highest specifier position within that projection (211).[98]

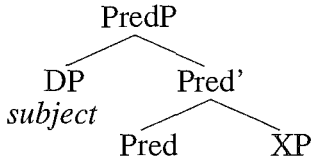
[98] See Akmajian (1984: 4-7) for a similar proposal.

(211) The basic structure of a small clause according to Stowell (1981 & 1995), where X is a lexical head or a head in its extended projection



Bowers (1993: 595f), on the other hand, suggests that small clauses involve a special functional head associated with predication (Pred). In Bower's analysis, the subject of a small clause appears in [Spec, Pred], while the maximal projection of the lexical predicate appears as the complement of Pred (212).

(212) The basic structure of small clauses according to Bowers (1993: 595f), where XP = AP, NP, VP, PP



According to Bowers (1993: 596f) the lexical realisation of the head Pred, is the particle *as*, which occurs in small clauses selected by verbs such as *regard* and *view* (213).

(213) a. They regard/view [him as an idiot].
b. They regard [him as crazy].
c. They view [him as beyond the pale].
d. They regard [him as without scruples].

One important property of the small clauses in (213) is that they involve individual-level predication. Ladusaw (1994) and Raposo & Uriagereka (1995: 185f) propose that individual-level predicates occur in categorical statements, whereas stage-level predicates appear in thetic statements.[99] According to Raposo & Uriagereka (1995: 186f), the difference between categorical and thetic statements is that categorical statements are about a subject (and thus have the

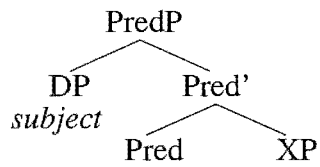
[99] I would like to thank Kate Kearns (p.c.) for drawing my attention the correlations between the stage-level/individual-level distinction and the distinction between thetic and categorical statements.

effect of 'topicalising' the subject), whereas thetic statements are about the predicate.

Raposo & Uriagereka (1995: 186f) suggest that the difference between categorical and thetic small clauses should be reflected in the syntax. In their approach, categorical small clauses contain a functional head that enters into agreement with the subject of the small clause, while thetic small clauses contain a functional head that enters into agreement with the predicate of the small clause.

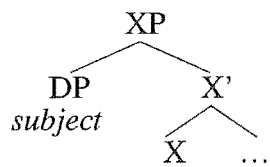
While the element *as* could be seen as evidence for the existence of a functional head associated with categorical small clauses, there is little overt evidence in English for the presence of a separate functional head in thetic small clauses. I will therefore assume that only categorical small clauses contain the functional head Pred, with the subject in [Spec, PredP] (214).[100]

(214) The basic structure of categorical small clauses (i.e. small clauses with an individual-level/property predicate)



Thetic small clauses simply consist of the (extended) projection of the lexical head, with the subject in the highest specifier position (215).[101]

(215) The basic structure of thetic small clauses (i.e. small clauses with a stage-level predicate)



The proposed approach allows us to capture Raposo & Uriagereka's (1995: 182f) generalisation that in categorical small clauses the subject has scope over the whole of the predicate, and thus resembles a topicalised constituent, whereas in

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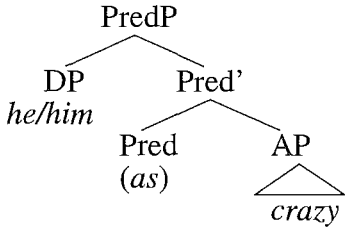
[100] The proposed structural distinction between categorical and thetic small clauses captures the generalisation proposed by Kate Kearns (p.c.), that the presence of Pred is characteristic of categorical/property predication, and is incompatible with thetic structures.

[101] Categorical small clauses thus follow the small clause structure proposed by Bowers (1993), while thetic small clauses have the small clause structure proposed by Stowell (1981, 1995).

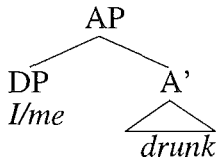
thetic small clauses, the predicate takes precedence over the subject in that it gives the small clause its category, and is directly selected by the verb.

As Raposo & Uriagereka (1995: 181, 192) point out, many adjectives may function either as individual-level predicates or as stage-level predicates. Depending on its interpretation, an adjectival small clause may therefore either have the structure in (216), or the structure in (217).

(216) Proposed structure for a small clause with an individual-level adjectival predicate (= categorical)

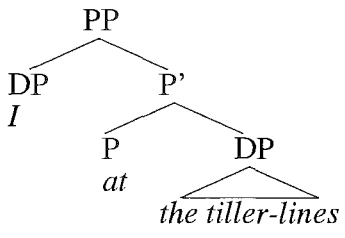


(217) Proposed structure for a small clause with a stage-level adjectival predicate (= thetic)



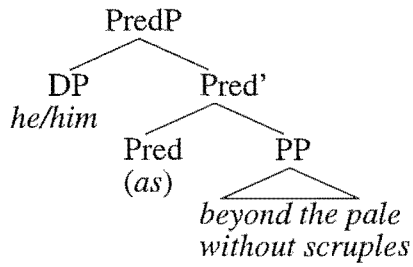
Prepositional predicates usually have a stage-level interpretation, which means that prepositional small clauses will tend to have the structure in (218).

(218) Proposed structure for a small clause with a stage-level prepositional predicate (= thetic)



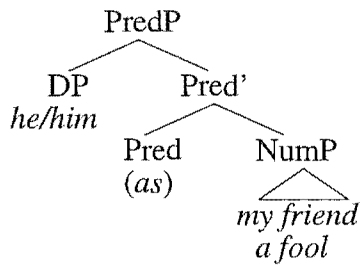
However, when the predicate of a prepositional small clause expresses a property, the small clause will have the structure in (219).

(219) Proposed structure for a small clause with an individual-level prepositional predicate (= categorical)



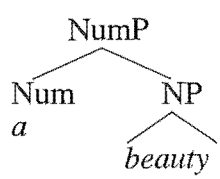
Since nominal predicates generally denote individual-level properties, a nominal small clause will usually be categorical and thus contain a PredP (220).

(220) Proposed structure for a small clause with a nominal predicate (generally individual-level = categorical)



I am assuming that the nominal projection selected by Pred in small clauses is NumP rather than NP. As can be seen from (220), nominal small clause predicates typically include the indefinite article *a*, but may also contain a possessive DP (e.g. *my*). In Section 2.2.2.3, I argued that cardinal determiners such as *a, six, many* belong to the category Num, and take NP complements (221).

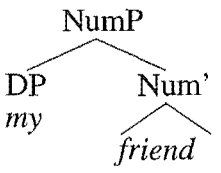
(221) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic structure of the noun phrase *a beauty*



This means that a nominal small clause such as *She a beauty*! must contain at least a NumP-layer.

Further evidence for the presence of a NumP-layer in nominal small clauses comes from the possible occurrence of possessive DPs in the nominal predicate. As discussed in Section 2.2.2.3, possessive DPs are most plausibly analysed as being base-generated in [Spec, NumP]. If we assume that predicative noun phrases lack a DP-layer, then a possessive DP appearing in a small clause predicate must occupy [Spec, NumP] at Spell-Out (222).

(222) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of the genitive DP *my* in the nominal small clause predicate *my friend*



Verbal small clauses usually involve thetic predication, and therefore lack a PredP-layer. They may however contain a number of verb-related functional heads.[102]

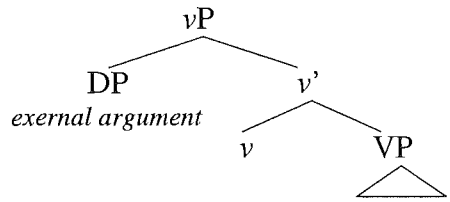
In Section 2.2.2.1, I argued that the external argument of a causative/agentive verb is base-generated in [Spec, *v*P] (223).

[102] Compare Hale & Keyser's (1998: 77 fn.4) observation that 'the object of the causative verb *make* is an extended projection of the verbal head', because sentential negation is possible (i) and because we invariably get the infinitive marker *to* in the passive (ii).

(i) We made [John not bake the cake].
(ii) John was made [to bake the cake].

The occurrence of *to* in the passive but not active version highlights the similarity between *to*-infinitives and verbal small clauses (cf. Wurmbrand 2001)

(223) Tree diagram illustrating the base positions of the external argument of a causative/agentive verb



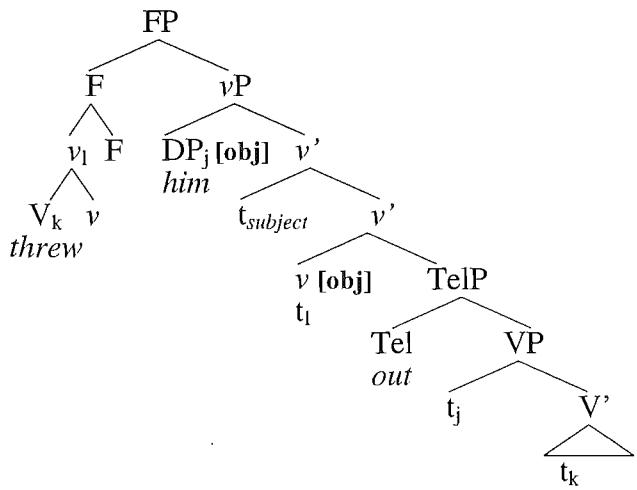
I also drew attention to the distributional differences between lone pronouns and full noun phrases in V-particle constructions (224), which can be seen as evidence that pronominal objects raise out of their VP-internal base-position before Spell-Out.

(224) a. Betsy threw out **her boyfriend**.
b. Betsy threw **her boyfriend** out.

c. * Betsy threw out **him**.
d. Betsy threw **him** out.

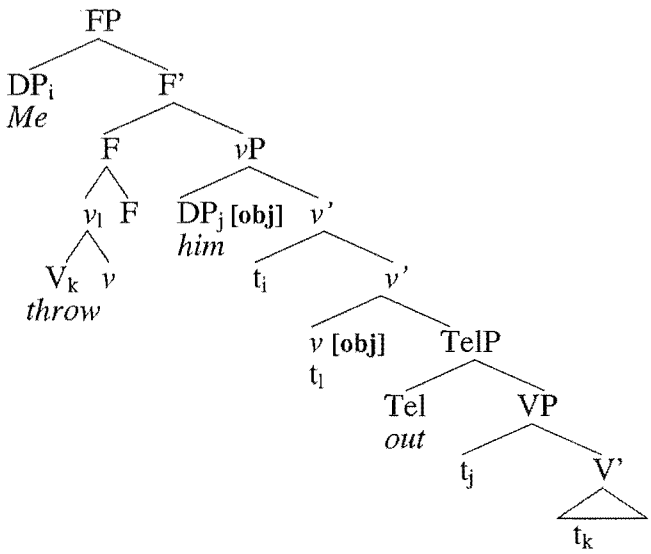
As discussed in Section 2.2.2.1, I am assuming that the word order in (224d) arises from overt movement of the object pronoun to [Spec, *v*P], and overt movement of the lexical verb to the head of a functional projection dominating *v*P (225).

(225) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of the lexical verb and a pronominal object in V-particle constructions



This suggests that the category of a small clause with a causative/agentive verbal predicate will have to be at least *v*P, and most probably FP (226).[103]

(226) Tree diagram illustrating the structure of the (Mad Magazine) small clause *Me throw him out!*[104]



The presence of the functional layers within verbal small clauses readily accounts for the possible occurrence of adverbs such as *completely* (227), and also correctly predicts that lone pronominal objects in a basic verbal small clause will consistently surface in the objective case required by the Pos-Case constraint.

(227) John saw [Mary **completely** destroy her car].
(Cardinaletti & Guasti 1995: 16)

There is however one type of verbal small clause that lacks a *v*P-layer, and fails to provide the opportunity for objective Pos-Case checking within the small clause: the identificational small clause (228).

(228) God saue the king! although I be not hee; And yet, Amen, if Heauen doe think [**him mee**] (Shakespeare, *Richard II*: IV. i. 174)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 251]

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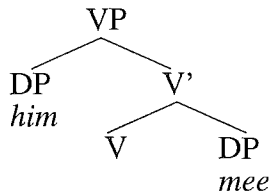
[103] See Akmajian (1984: 4-7) for a very similar structural analysis of Mad Magazine sentences.
[104] This small clause is most likely to occur in a context where the scenario alluded to is highly implausible.

Although identificational small clauses may look like nominal small clauses at first glance, the second noun phrase in an identificational small clause is referential rather than predicative. The small clause in (228) does not attribute a property to *him*, but expresses the putative identity between *him* and *mee*. Identificational small clauses thus have a thetic rather than categorical interpretation. I will therefore assume that identificational small clauses are VPs headed by an empty counterpart of identificational *be* (229).

(229) Tree diagram illustrating the structure of identificational small clauses



The absence of a *v*P-layer in identificational small clauses means that neither the higher nor the lower argument will be able to check objective Pos-Case within the small clause. As a result, the lower argument in identificational small clauses will be more susceptible to non-case influences than the lower argument of other verbal small clauses. Thus, the use of the nominative *he* in (230) could be argued to arise from the need to distinguish the identificational small clause from the superficially parallel construction in (231), where *me* and *him* are objects of *wish* rather than arguments of an identificational small clause predicate (cf. Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 255).

(230) And were I any thing but what I am, I would wish [me onley **he**]
(Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*: I. i. 236) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 255]

(231) If I could wish for anybody, I would wish me only him.

While the syntactic differences between basic verbal and identificational small clauses have a bearing on the case properties of any lower arguments in the small clause, the only small clause-internal syntactic factor that could potentially influence the case of small clause subjects is the presence versus absence of the functional head Pred.[105]

[105] Compare Raposo & Uriagereka's (1995: 186f) proposal that the case properties of the different functional heads they propose for thetic and categorical small clauses are responsible for the case differences between categorical and thetic small clauses in Irish.

If Pred was analysed as an agreement-related functional head able to check Pos-Case on a DP in its specifier, we would predict that the subject of a categorical small clause will consistently surface in the Pos-Case checked by Pred, provided we assume that the subject DP raises to [Spec, PredP] from a position within the (extended) projection of the small clause predicate.[106] However, there is little evidence for agreement between Pred and the subject of a categorical small clause in English, and the pronoun case data presented in Section 4.8.1 do not provide any evidence for case distinctions between the subjects of categorical and thetic small clauses. This suggests that Pred is unable to check Pos-Case on a DP in its specifier.

The surface form of a pronominal subject in any independent or absolutive small clause will therefore be constrained by Def-Case rather than Pos-Case requirements.[107] Since all small clause subjects function as the highest argument of a lexical predicate, they will also be linked to nominative Arg-Case. As mentioned in sections 4.6.2 and 4.7.2, the relative strength of the Arg-Case and Def-Case constraints in Present-Day English would lead us to expect that nominative subjects should be more strongly favoured in absolutive position than they are in Present-Day English. The ready occurrence of objective subjects in absolutive small clauses could thus be seen as evidence for the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them.*

When the small clause appears as the complement of a matrix verb, the subject of the small clause will be able to raise to [Spec, *v*P] in the matrix clause, and check objective Pos-Case there (232).

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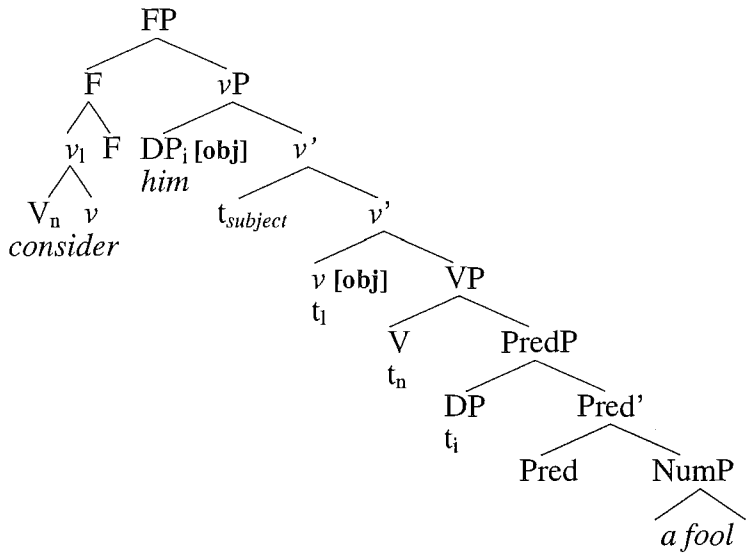
[106] As discussed in Section 2.2.2.1, arguments are only able to check Pos-Case if their surface position differs from their θ-position.

[107] Compare Abney's (1987: 191 fn.52) and Schütze's (1997: 52-55) suggestion that the subject of an absolutive small clause appears in the objective default case, and Akmajian's (1984: 3) and Siegel's (1987: 70) proposal that the subject of a Mad Magazine sentence will surface in the objective case, because nominative case is assigned only to noun phrases 'preceding a [+ Tense] auxiliary or verb'.
The drawback of the analyses proposed by Abney (1987), Schütze (1997), Akmajian (1984), and Siegel (1987) is that they are unable to account for the occurrence of nominative subjects in independent and absolutive small clauses. In the approach proposed here, on the other hand, the variation between nominative and objective pronoun forms in this context falls out from the competition between the Arg-Case constraint and the Def-Case constraint.

(232) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and Pos-Case properties of a lone pronoun functioning as the subject of an embedded nominal small clause[108]



The possible occurrence of nominative forms when the subject of a small clause is coordinated or modified, could be seen as evidence that coordinated pronouns may remain within the small clause and need not raise to [Spec, *v*P] of the matrix verb.

[108] t_{we} = trace of the subject of the matrix clause

4.9 Pronoun case in gapping constructions

4.9.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

Pronominal objects in gapped clauses consistently surface in their objective form regardless of whether the gapped clause contains an overt auxiliary (233)-(234) or not (235).[109]

(233) Example illustrating the case of object pronouns in clauses where the subject is followed by an overt auxiliary, but the lexical verb has been gapped

a. I despise you as heartily as you can __ **me** (Henry Fielding, *Works*, 2nd ed., London 1762: 3.534) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 250]

b. Doesn't it give you a funny feeling ...? It does __ **me**.
(Arnold Bennett, *Old wives' tale*, Tauchnitz 1909 [1908]: 1.166)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 249]

c. she ha's deceued her father, and may __ **thee**
(Shakespeare, *Othello*: I. iii. 294) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 250]

(234) Example illustrating the case of object pronouns in clauses where the subject is preceded by an overt auxiliary and the lexical verb has been gapped

This sword hat ended him, so shall it __ **thee**
(Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 1*: V. iii. 9) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 250]

(235) Example illustrating the case of object pronouns in gapped clauses lacking an overt verb

That would be a motive for [her murdering him], not [he __ **her**]
(Berkeley Vane Mystery: 208) [Jespersen 1946: 136]

---

[109] As will be discussed in Section 4.9.2, gapped clauses containing an overt auxiliary verb are generally referred to as pseudo-gapping in the literature (cf. Lasnik 1995; Johnson 1996: 3; Kennedy & Merchant 2000: 121f).

The case of subject pronouns in gapped clauses depends at least to some extent on the nature of the gapped constituent:

When the gapped clause contains an overt auxiliary, pronominal subjects appear to be obligatorily nominative, no matter whether they precede (236) or follow the auxiliary (237)-(238), and regardless of whether they receive contrastive focus (237) or not (238).

(236) Example illustrating the case of subject pronouns in clauses where the subject is followed by an overt auxiliary, but the lexical verb has been gapped

as hee tendreth virtue, so **he** will __ you (John Lyly, Campaspe, in Manly, *Specimens of Pre-Shakespearean Drama*, Boston 1900: 278) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 249]

(237) Examples illustrating the case of subject pronouns in clauses where the subject is preceded by an overt auxiliary and receives contrastive focus, and the lexical verb has been gapped

a. Well, you can do me a good turn, and so can **I** __ you (Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*, London 1887 [1883]: 168) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 250]

b. I shall always love you ... So shall **I** __ you (Compton Mackenzie, *Carnival*, London 1922 [1912]: 177) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 250]

(238) Example illustrating the case of subject pronouns in clauses where a non-contrastive subject is preceded by an overt auxiliary, and the lexical verb has been gapped

We follow'd then our lord, our soueragine king; So should **we** __ you (Shakespeare, *Richard III*: I. iii. 148) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 250]

When the gapped clause contains neither a finite auxiliary, nor a lexical verb, the subject may surface either in the nominative (239) or in the objective case (240).

(239) Examples of nominative subjects in gapped clauses lacking an overt verb

a. A: I'll bring the salad.
B: And [**I** __ the wine]. (Chao 1987: 20)

b. John is fond of them, and [**they** ___ of him] (Chao 1987: 21)

(240) Examples of objective subjects in gapped clauses lacking an overt verb

Why couldn't he be my age or [**me** __ his] (John Fowles. 1971 [1963]. *The collector*. Cape: 193) [Erdmann 1978: 68]

Nominative subjects are not confined to clauses where the gapped verbal complex is finite (239)-(240), but also occur quite readily in gapped gerunds (241). While the occurrence of a nominative subject in a gapped gerund may coincide with a nominative in the initial conjunct of the gapping construction (241a), it need not (241c).

(241) Examples of nominative subjects in gapped gerunds

a. they separated, he driving back to the Temple, and [**she** __ to her own house] (Arthur Conan Doyle, *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, Tauchnitz 1893-1905: 36) [Jespersen 1946: 47]

b. My mistress being dead, and [**I** __ once more alone], I had to look out for a new place (Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, London 1867 [1852]: 37) [Jespersen 1946: 47]

c. That would be a motive for [her murdering him], not [**he** __ her] (Berkeley Vane Mystery: 208) [Jespersen 1946: 136]

Johnson (1996: 25f), following Siegel (1987: 53-56, 71 n.2), draws attention to the difference between clauses that lack a finite verb but contain a non-finite lexical verb (242), and sentences that contain neither a finite nor a non-finite verb form (243) (cf. also (239)-(241)). According to Johnson (1996: 25f), the use of a nominative subject is more degraded when the clause contains a nonfinite main verb (242a), than when no verb is present (243a).

(242) a. ?? We can't eat caviar and **he** ___ eat beans.
b. We can't eat caviar and **him** ___ eat beans.

(243) a. WE like CAVIAR, and **HE** ____ BEANS.
b. WE like CAVIAR, and **HIM** ____ BEANS.

4.9.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

Since the missing predicate in a gapped sentence is reconstructed at a semantic level of representation (cf. Chao 1987: 65-74), Arg-Case will always apply to both subjects and objects in gapping constructions. The availability of Pos-Case checking, on the other hand, depends on the surface position of the subject and object at Spell-Out.

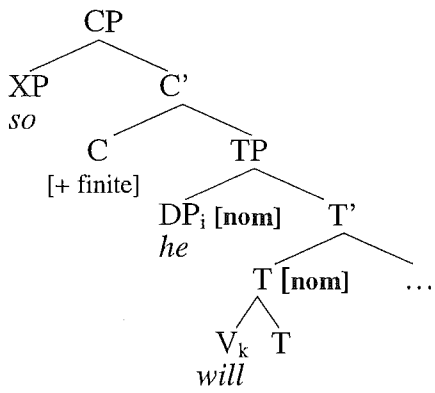
In so-called pseudo-gapped sentences, where a finite auxiliary verb is present but the lexical verb has been gapped (cf. (236)-(238)), the subject pronoun is most plausibly analysed as occupying [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out (cf. Kennedy & Merchant 2000: 122).[110] As discussed in Section 3.3.2, I am assuming that finite C and T can combine to check nominative Pos-Case on a DP in [Spec, TP] or on a DP in [Spec, CP]. I am also assuming that Pos-Case checking is limited to one specifier position per head or combination of heads in any given derivation. Since T-to-C raising endows a finite C with the ability to check nominative Pos-Case on a DP in [Spec, CP], a DP in [Spec, TP] will only be able to check nominative Pos-Case if the finite verb has not undergone T-to-C raising.

This means that the subject of a pseudo-gapped clause will only be able to check nominative Pos-Case in sentences such as (244), where the finite auxiliary occupies T at Spell-Out (245).

(244) as hee tendreth virtue, so **he** will __ you (John Lyly, Campaspe, in Manly, *Specimens of Pre-Shakespearean Drama*, Boston 1900: 278)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 249]

[110] The proposed analysis also fits in with Lasnik's (1995) assumption that the subject of a pseudo-gapped clause occupies [Spec, Agr_SP] at Spell-Out (cf. Sections 2.2.1-2.2.2 for a discussion of case checking with and without Agr projections).

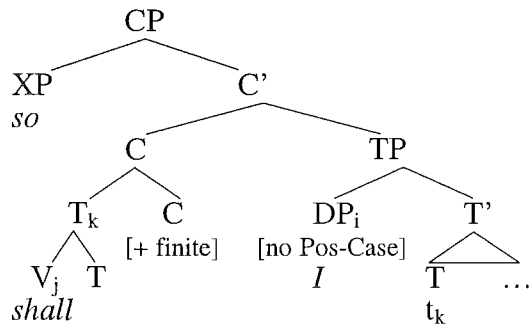
(245) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and Pos-Case properties of the subject of a pseudo-gapped clause where the finite auxiliary occupies T at Spell-Out



In sentences like (246), where the auxiliary has undergone overt raising to C (247), T will be unable to check Pos-Case on the subject pronoun in [Spec, TP], and the pronoun will be instead receive objective Def-Case as well as nominative Arg-Case (cf. Section 3.3.2).

(246) I shall always love you ... So shall I __ you (Compton Mackenzie, *Carnival*, London 1922 [1912]: 177) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 250]

(247) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and Pos-Case properties of the subject of a pseudo-gapped clause where the finite auxiliary has undergone overt raising to C



In Present-Day English, pronominal subjects of pseudo-gapped sentences like (246) consistently surface in the nominative case. This suggests that the Arg-Case constraint is stronger than the Def-Case constraint in Present-Day English. It also indicates that lone unmodified pronouns in [Spec, TP] are weak and therefore not

subject to influence from any additional non-case constraints on pronoun form (cf. Chapter 5).[111]

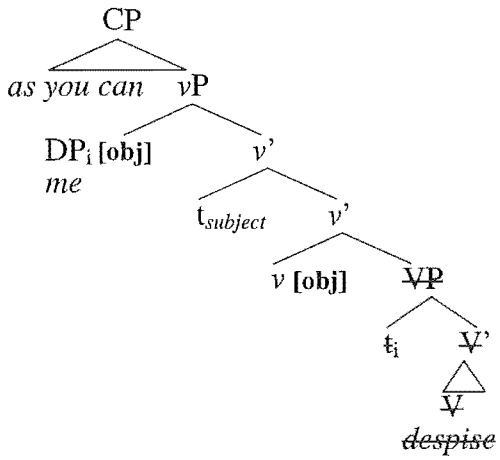
Pseudo-gapping is often analysed as involving a combination of object movement and deletion of VP at PF. Jayaseelan (1990: 64-73) and Merchant & Kennedy (2000: 121f) assume that the object of a pseudo-gapped clause is right-adjoined to VP before the VP undergoes PF-deletion, while Lasnik (1995) proposes that the object raises to [Spec, Agr_OP], which corresponds to [Spec, *v*P] in the approach adopted here.

The right-adjunction analysis would predict that the pronominal object of a pseudo-gapped clause is unable to check Pos-Case, and is instead influenced by objective Def-Case as well as objective Arg-Case. Since a right-adjoined pronominal object does not occupy a surface position associated with the licensing of weak pronouns (cf. Chapter 5), we might also expect its surface form to be influenced by non-case factors such as Relative Positional Coding and the trend towards invariant strong forms (cf. Chapter 8).

[111] The apparent obligatoriness of nominative pronoun forms in both contrastive (237) and non-contrastive contexts (238) could be seen as supporting evidence for Cardinaletti & Starke's (1999: 163) claim that weak pronouns are able to bear contrastive focus.

The object-raising analysis (248) would predict that the pronominal object of a pseudo-gapped clause receives objective Pos-Case and Arg-Case.

(248) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and Pos-Case properties of the object of a pseudo-gapped clause, if we assume that pseudo-gapping involves overt object raising to [Spec, *v*P], followed by VP deletion at PF (cf. Lasnik 1995)[112]



Since [Spec, *v*P] is a licensing position for weak pronouns in English, the pronominal object in (248) could be either weak or strong, and is thus not necessarily influenced by non-case constraints on pronoun form.

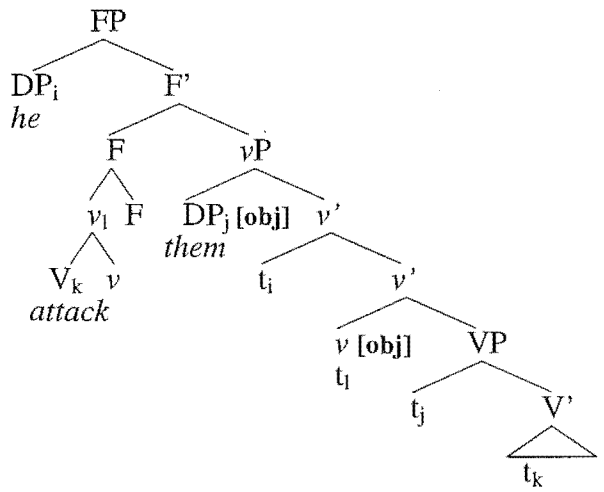
A pronominal object is also likely to raise to [Spec, *v*P] before Spell-Out in gapped clauses that contain a nonfinite lexical verb but lack a finite verb (242). As a result, the object in gapped clauses like (249) will receive objective Pos-Case as well as objective Arg-Case (250).

(249) She would defend their arguments and [he attack them].

---

[112] Following Kennedy & Merchant (2000), constituents deleted at PF are indicated with strikethrough in the tree diagram

(250) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and case properties of pronominal subjects and objects in gapped clauses containing an overt nonfinite lexical verb, but no overt finite verb[113]



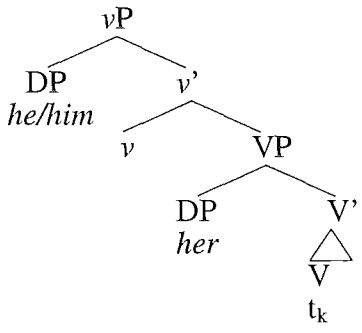
Since there is no evidence for the presence of T at Spell-Out, the subject of a gapped clause such as (249) will be linked to nominative Arg-Case, but will receive objective Def-Case rather than nominative Pos-Case (cf. Chao 1987: 100f; Siegel 1987; Johnson 1996; Kayne 2000: 169). As discussed above, Arg-Case appears to be more influential than Def-Case in Present-Day English. The variation between nominative and objective subjects in this construction (cf. (242) & (249)) is thus unlikely to arise from competition between the case constraints alone, but points to additional influence from non-case factors such as the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them* in strong pronoun contexts.

Following Johnson (1996: 24, 38f), I will assume that subject and object pronouns occupy their θ-positions in gapped clauses containing neither an overt auxiliary nor an overt lexical verb (251)-(252).

(251) That would be a motive for [her murdering him], not [**he/him** __ **her**].

[113] The structure proposed in (250) is identical to the structure proposed for verbal small clauses (cf. Section 4.8.2). This similarity between verbal small clauses and gapped clauses like (249) was already noted by Siegel (1987), who argued that gapped clauses containing an overt nonfinite lexical verb have the same syntactic properties as Mad Magazine sentences.

(252) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position and Pos-Case status of subject and object pronouns in gapped clauses containing neither an overt auxiliary nor an overt lexical verb (cf. Johnson 1996)[114]



Since Pos-Case checking is confined to arguments that have raised out of their θ-positions by Spell-Out, neither the subject nor the object pronoun in (252) is able to check Pos-Case. This means that the subject will receive nominative Arg-Case and objective Def-Case, while the object will receive objective Arg-Case and objective Def-Case. The ready use of objective subjects in gapped clauses, suggests that the surface form of the pronouns in (252) is further influenced by the general trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them.*

As mentioned in Section 4.9.1, Johnson (1996: 25f) reports a greater preference for nominative subjects in gapped clauses without an overt verb (253) than in gapped clauses with an overt lexical verb (254).

(253) a. WE like CAVIAR, and **HE** ____ BEANS.
b. WE like CAVIAR, and **HIM** ____ BEANS.

(254) a. ?? We can't eat caviar and **he** ___ eat beans.
b. We can't eat caviar and **him** ___ eat beans.

This case difference is unexpected even if we assume that the case constraints compete with the trend towards invariant strong forms, because the subject would be influenced by Arg-Case, Def-Case, and the Invariant Strong Form constraint in both (253) and (254).

However, there is another non-case factor that could be responsible for the greater occurrence of nominatives in gapped clauses lacking an overt verb (253).

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[114] I follow Johnson (1996: 24) in assuming that the gapped verb has undergone ATB-movement to a functional projection above *v*P.

In Section 4.8.2, I argued that the use of a nominative subject in identificational small clauses facilitates the identification of the first noun phrase as the subject of the small clause. Similarly, the use of a nominative subject in gapped clauses without an overt verb will facilitate the identification of the first noun phrase as the subject of a gapped clause. In gapped clauses containing an overt lexical verb (254), on the other hand, the subject status of the noun phrase preceding the lexical verb is already indicated by its position relative to the lexical verb, so nominative case is not required for disambiguation purposes.

4.10 Pronoun case in bare argument ellipsis

Pronouns in constructions involving bare argument ellipsis (also known as 'stripping') generally surface in the objective case in Present-Day English, no matter whether they are interpreted as the subject of a clause (225a-c) or the object of a verb (225d). Nominatives appear marginally possible in stripped clauses with an overt subject (225c), but not in stripped clauses with an overt object (225d).

(255) Examples of bare argument ellipsis/stripping

a. Yes, I know. And [**me**] too. (Doris Lessing, *The four-gated city*, Panther Books 1972 [1969]: 603) [Erdmann 1978: 68]

b. Other men might, but not [**them**]. (Frances Noyes Hart, *The Bellamy trial*, American edition, 1929 (Heinemann's omnibus books): 161) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 275]

c. John might have wanted to leave, but not [**me/I**]. (i.e. I didn't want to leave)

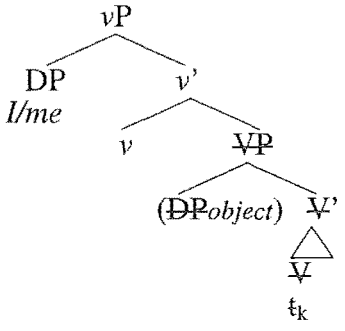
d. Sarah saw Harry at the library, but not [**me/*I**]. (i.e. Sarah didn't see me)

According to Moltmann (1992: 228), 'Bare Argument Ellipsis is a construction in which the coordinator seems to coordinate a single argument with a clause.' Moltmann (1992: 22, 228) proposes that bare argument ellipsis involves three-dimensional tree structures, where the bare argument has exactly the same syntactic and case status as the associated noun phrase in the preceding clause. While this approach correctly predicts that a pronominal object should obligatorily surface in its objective form in stripped clauses (255d), it is unable to account for the clear preference for objective rather than nominative case forms in stripped clauses with an overt subject (255a-c).

Chao (1987: 34f) suggests that stripping constructions have a surface representation very similar to the structure of gapping constructions (cf. also Lobeck 1995: 27f). In both types of constructions, (the heads of) at least some verbal projections are absent at Spell-Out. However, gapped clauses usually contain at least two constituents (e.g. the subject and the object), whereas stripped clauses contain only one.

As discussed in Section 4.9.2, Johnson (1996) and Kayne (2000) argue that gapped clauses lack certain functional projections (especially TP). Johnson (1996) also proposes that gapping involves ATB-movment of the verb. To account for the absence of overt constituents other than the bare argument in stripping, we could combine Johnson's (1996) ATB-movement approach to gapping with the VP deletion analysis proposed for pseudo-gapping constructions by Jayaseelan (1990), Lasnik (1995), and Kennedy & Merchant (2000).[115] Stripped clauses with an overt subject (255a-c) could then be analysed as in (256), while stripped clauses with an overt object (255d) could be anlaysed as in (257).[116]

(256) Tree diagram illustrating the structure of stripped clauses with an overt subject, if we assume that stripping combines elements of ATB-movement and VP deletion[117]

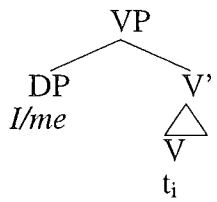


[115] See Section 4.9.2 for a more detailed discussion of pseudo-gapping.

[116] I am assuming that *not* has a status similar to that of *and* and *but* in stripping constructions, and does not form part of the stripped clause (cf. Sections 4.11-4.13 for further discussion of *and*, *but*, and *not*).

[117] Although I have offered only examples where no DP object is present in the first conjunct of the stripping construction, bare argument ellipsis with an overt subject is also possible when the first conjunct of the construction contains a DP object. I have therefore included an optional deleted object DP in the tree diagram.

(257) Tree diagram illustrating the structure of stripped clauses with an overt object



The analysis proposed in (256) & (257) predicts that overt subjects and objects in a stripped clause will be unable to enter into Pos-Case checking, because all stripped clauses lack a TP-layer,[118] and stripped clauses which contain only an overt object also lack a *v*P-layer.

Since LF reconstruction is obligatory for any predicates that are missing at Spell-Out (cf. Chao 1987: 65-74), subjects will still receive nominative Arg-Case, and objects will be linked to objective Arg-Case. The preference for objective pronoun forms in stripped clauses with overt subjects indicates that nominative Arg-Case competes not only with objective Def-Case, but also with the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them* in strong pronoun contexts.

4.11 The case of coordinated pronouns

4.11.1 Case trends identified in existing studies

Klima (1964) suggests that coordinated pronouns will either consistently surface in the same case form as corresponding lone pronouns, or consistently surface in the objective case. Similar suggestions can be found in Erdmann (1978), Harris (1981), Emonds (1985 & 1986), and Lumsden (1987).

Klima (1964), Emonds (1985 & 1986), Householder (1986 & 1987), and Jones (1988) all argue that we find a general trend towards the use of objective forms in coordinates in Present-Day English.

Henry (1995) and Schütze (1997) provide evidence for a link between the availability of nominative case in subject coordinates and the presence of subject-verb agreement. According to Henry (1995: 39), coordinated subjects in Belfast

[118] Cf. Chao's (1987: 100f) suggestion that the absence of the head of TP means that case cannot be checked at Spell-Out.

English may surface either in their nominative forms or in their objective forms, if the verb is plural (258).

(258) a. [**He** and **I**] are going.
b. [**Him** and **me**] are going.

When the verb takes the 3sg form (and thus fails to agree with the coordinate), the pronouns in a subject coordinate obligatorily surface in their objective forms in Belfast English (259).

(259) a. * [**He** and **I**] is going.
b. [**Him** and **me**] is going.

While many early discussions of pronoun case in coordinates have tended to assume that case in coordinates is strictly symmetrical, there is considerable evidence for systematic case differences between initial and final conjuncts (cf. Schwartz 1985, Quattlebaum 1994, Sobin 1997, Zoerner 1995, Johannessen 1998, Gelderen 1997). However, most of the examples cited in existing studies do not provide any clear evidence for either symmetric or asymmetric case assignment in coordinates, because the pronoun is coordinated with a noun phrase that does not exhibit overt case marking (260)-(261).

(260) Examples where the coordinate appears as the subject of a finite clause and the pronoun is coordinated with a proper noun

a. Yeah but [**me** and Catherine] really don't talk about you know
(Longman Corpus of London Teenager Language, excerpt provided by Gisle Andersen and Anna-Brita Stenström) [Hudson 1995: 380)

b. How have [**he** and Margery] been getting on lately? - Oh, all right, like they always have
(William Somerset Maugham, *Plays*, Tauchnitz ed.: 4.273)
[Jespersen 1946: 359]

(261) Example where the coordinate appears as the subject of a finite clause and the pronoun is coordinated with a possessed noun phrase containing the genitive/possessive form of the pronoun

[**I** and my nurse] had been made to rest (Thomas de Quincey, *Confessions of an opium-eater, etc.*, London 1901 (Macmillan): 84)
[Jespersen 1946: 317]

Parker et al. (1988) studied conjunct order preferences in subject coordinates involving singular pronoun forms paired with lexical NPs or other singular pronouns in the same case. The results of their survey support the asymmetry in the distribution of 1sg and 3sg forms that was also commented on in earlier studies: the 1sg accusative *me* is strongly favoured in initial conjuncts and disfavoured in final conjuncts of subject coordinates, whereas the 3sg accusatives *him* and *her* are more strongly favoured in final conjuncts of subject coordinates. Unfortunately, Parker et al. did not test coordinates involving the 1sg nominative *I* in their survey, nor did they test the distribution of 1pl and 3pl forms.

Quattlebaum's (1994) study of the distribution of singular pronoun forms provides information about the distribution of *I* as well as *me*, but again failed to elicit data on the distribution of 1pl and 3pl forms. Although she tested case preferences in particular conjunct positions rather than ordering preferences for particular case forms, Quattlebaum's findings bear strong parallels to the results of Parker et al. (1988): 3sg nominatives are largely confined to initial conjuncts of subject coordinates, whereas the 1sg nominative *I* is strongly favoured over *me* in final conjunct position. As in Parker et al.'s survey, the 3sg objective forms *him* and *her* were more strongly favoured in final than in initial conjuncts of subject coordinates.

Householder (1986: 152) observes that Shakespeare's work contains no examples of subject coordinates with objective forms in both conjuncts, but notes that we find instances of *I* in final conjuncts of coordinates in prepositional complement position (262).

(262) between you and I

Erdmann (1978: 69f) argues that *me, him, her, us, them* 'occur as the non-initial member of a co-ordination' in formal Standard English subject coordinates, whereas the use of the objective forms in initial conjuncts of subject coordinates 'is restricted to casual, relaxed speech or is a characteristic of substandard English'. Most of Erdmann's (1978: 70) examples involve 1sg pronoun forms, and Erdmann suggests that the use of the objective form in coordinates is most widely attested for 1sg, with only some examples for the other pronouns.

(263) Erdmann's (1978: 69f) predictions on pronoun case in subject coordinates

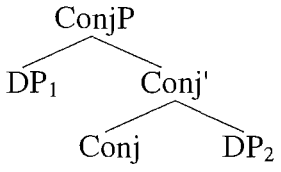
	initial conjunct	**final conjunct**
formal Standard English	I - he - she - we - they	I - he - she - we - they me - him - her - us - them
casual, relaxed speech and 'substandard' English	I - he - she - we - they me - him - her - us - them	(I - he - she - we - they ??) me - him - her - us - them

4.11.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

The analysis of coordinates most in keeping with the approach to syntactic structure adopted here, treats the coordinate as a phrase (ConjP) headed by a conjunction, which is likely to be a functional rather than lexical category (Munn 1987:133,136f). The structure of the ConjP is assumed to be strictly binary (Munn 1987). In a coordinate with two conjuncts, the initial conjunct appears in [Spec, ConjP], and the final conjunct appears in [Comp, Conj]. If a coordinate contains more than two conjuncts, the ConjP shells out (Zoerner 1995).

In the following discussion I will focus on coordinates with two conjuncts (264).

(264)



I am treating Conj as a functional category unspecified for major category features (±N, ±V), and assume that the ConjP will inherit the major category features of the constituents conjoined in the ConjP (cf. Zoerner 1995: 34[119]). Where the coordinate involves the conjunction of two DPs, as in (264), ConjP will inherit the major category features [+N, -V] from DP_1 and DP_2.

The Arg-Case constraint predicts that both conjuncts of a coordinate will surface in the case assigned to the coordinate through structural linking.[120]

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[119] Note that Zoerner (1995: 35) assumes that ConjP is immediately dominated by a category node that bears the category of the conjuncts. The presence of such an additional node seems rather problematic (= projection that lacks a head), and does not seem necessary if we assume that ConjP itself can inherit the category features of its conjuncts.

[120] Compare HPSG and LFG approaches to case in coordinates (cf. Pollard & Sag 1994, and Kaplan & Maxwell 1995).

There is evidence for some case influence on all conjuncts of coordinates in many of the data reported in existing studies, but it is not as pronounced as we would expect if the case form of coordinated pronouns was determined by Arg-Case alone. The most problematic trends for Arg-Case are the fairly ready acceptance of non-1sg accusative forms (*him, her, us, them*) in the final conjuncts of subject coordinates, and the tendency to accept the 1sg nominative *I* in final conjuncts of coordinates that appear as the object of a verb or preposition.

The predictions of the Pos-Case constraint depend on whether we treat Conj as an agreement-related functional head or not. Since there is little evidence that Conj bears any agreement features in English (except possibly the number feature [plural]), an analysis of Conj as a Pos-Case checker would be rather problematic.[121]

Assuming that Conj does not qualify as a Pos-Case checker, only the coordinate as a whole will be subject to Pos-Case, provided it occupies the specifier of T, *v*, and D, or the specifier of CP in matrix questions. Whether Pos-Case influences the conjuncts of the coordinate will then depend on whether ConjP is transparent to case or not.

If ConjP is transparent to case (cf. Zoerner 1995: 35; Johannessen 1993 & 1998), then all conjuncts will be predicted to surface with the Pos-Case found on the whole coordinate.

If ConjP is opaque to case (cf. Emonds 1985), the surface form of pronouns in coordinates will be influenced by the Def-Case constraint rather than Pos-Case.[122]

As we will see in Chapter 7, the results of my own survey suggest that coordinates are transparent to outside case influences, and that initial and final conjuncts are equally affected by the demands of Pos-Case and Arg-Case. At the same time, the distribution of pronoun case forms reported in existing studies and attested in my own survey data, also indicates that coordinates are perceived as asymmetric: thus, non-1sg nominatives are much more readily used in initial than in final conjuncts of subject coordinates; and the 1sg nominative *I* is strongly favoured in final conjuncts, but disfavoured in initial conjunct position.

The greatest problem for any purely case-based approach to pronoun case in coordinates is the discrepancy between the distribution of 1sg case forms and the

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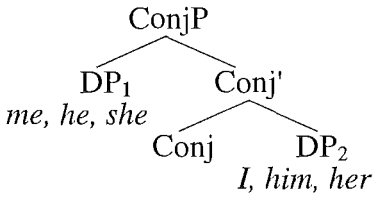
[121] What is more, Conj could only plausibly be argued to check objective Pos-Case case on the final conjunct. Such an analysis would require us to assume that Conj always shells out, because the final conjunct will have to move to a spec position to check Pos-Case, and then the conjunction will have to raise to a higher position in order to give the correct surface order.

[122] Compare Schütze's 1997 suggestion that coordinated pronouns will surface with default case, because they do not enter into spec-head agreement with the verb. See also Jones 1988.

distribution of non-1sg case forms (cf. especially Quattlebaum's 1994 study). If the case form of coordinated pronouns was influenced solely by Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case, we would expect the 3sg nominatives *he* and *she* (and also all other non-1sg nominatives) to be favoured in the same positions as the 1sg nominative *I*. Although existing studies do not provide very exhaustive data on the distribution of pronoun forms in coordinates, the surveys conducted by Parker et al. (1988) and Quattlebaum (1994) indicate that the 1sg objective form *me* patterns with the 3sg nominatives *he* and *she* in that it is more readily used in initial than in final position, while the 1sg nominative *I* patterns with the 3sg objective forms *him* and *her* in being favoured in final conjunct position.

If we assume that coordinates have the asymmetric structure given in (265), the distribution of 1sg and 3sg case forms in coordinates could be seen as evidence that *me, he*, and *she* are favoured in asymmetrically c-commanding positions, while *I, him* and *her* are favoured in c-commanded positions.

(265) Tree diagram illustrating the asymmetric c-command relationship between initial and final conjuncts in a coordinate



Since existing studies of pronoun case in coordinates did not test the whole range of alternating personal pronouns in both initial and final conjuncts of subject, object, and prepositional complement coordinates, the distribution of pronoun case forms in coordinates and its implications for our approach to English pronoun case will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 7 and 8.

4.12 Pronouns following *but, save, except*

4.12.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 228-230) observe that *but, save,* and *except* are often followed by a nominative pronoun form, regardless of whether the pronoun is interpreted as a subject (266) or the object of a verb (267).

(266) Instances of nominative forms after *but*, *save,* and *except*, where the pronoun is interpreted as a subject

a. who sent it but **I**? (Redford, 'Wyt and science', in Manly's *Specimens I*, 421ff; verse 712) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 228]

b. no body should be sad but **I** (Shakespeare, *King John*: IV. i. 14) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 228]

c. All, save **I**, were at rest (Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, Everyman, 1818: 143) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 230]

d. Ther every wight save **he** ... was with the leoun frete (Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales* in Skeat's six-volume edition, Group B: 473) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 229]

e. he dreamt that all were drowned save **he** (Hugh Walpole, *The green mirror*, 1918: 389) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 230]

f. No one heard save **she** (Arnold Bennett, *Clayhanger*, Tauchnitz edition, 1912 (1910): 1.293) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 230]

g. And everybody is to know him except **I**? (George Meredith, *The tragic comedians*, London 1893 (1881): 28) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 230]

(267) Instances of nominative forms after *but* and *save*, where the pronoun is interpreted as the object of a verb

a. my father had no childe but **I** (Shakespeare, *As you like it*: I. ii. 18) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 229]

b. That I kisse aught but **he** (Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*: II. iii. 153) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 228]

c. Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but **she** (Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*: I. ii. 14) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 229]

d. What stayes had I but **they** (Shakespeare, *Richard III*: II. ii. 76) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 229]

e. Yet shal ye find no other wight saue **she** (Gammer (Gurton's Needle), in *Manly's Specimens*: 147) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 230]

According to Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 229), *save* (and the earlier *sauf*), only rarely takes the objective case. However, *but* and *except* appear quite readily with an objective pronoun form, even when the pronoun is interpreted as the subject of a finite clause (268).

(268) Instances of objective forms after *but* and *except*, where the pronoun is interpreted as the subject

a. So nobody arrived on shore but **him** (Byron, *Don Juan*: canto 2, stanza 106) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 229]

b. Nobody comes here but **him** for a long time now (Galsworthy, *Five tales*, London, 1918: 29) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 229]

c. I suppose everybody knows but **us** (Somerset Maugham, *Plays*, volume 4, Tauchnitz edition: 107) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 229]

d. Perhaps any woman would, except **me** (Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urberilles*, London 1892 (1891): 101) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 230]

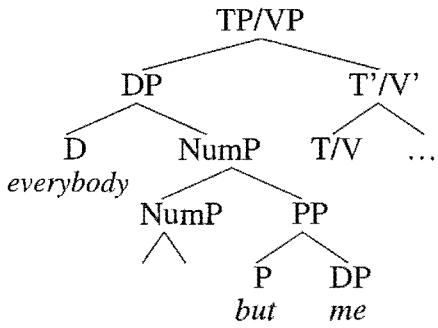
4.12.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

The case variation after *but, save,* and *except* is similar to the case variation found in coordinates. The structures involving *but, save,* and *except* differ from coordinates with *and* in that the conjunction and second conjunct may be separated from the initial conjunct.[123] What is more, there is usually no plausible ellipsis/conjunction reduction analysis for *but, save, except* constructions, even though such an analysis is potentially available for coordinates joined by *and. But, save, except* and the following noun phrase thus appear to form a constituent closely resembling a prepositional phrase.

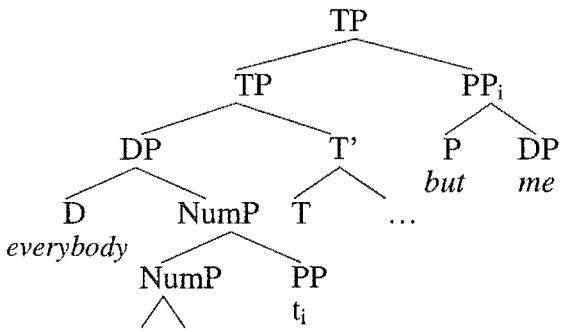
Moltmann (1992: 376) proposes that exception phrases headed by *but, save, except* are PPs base-generated in an adjoined position to a noun phrase (269), and may be subsequently extraposed to clause-final position (270).

[123] Interestingly, Old English *and* displayed many of the properties characteristic of *but, save* and *except* today.

(269) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status of a pronoun in an exception phrase headed by *but, except, save*, when the exception phrase appears in its base-position within DP (cf. Moltmann 1992: 373, 376)



(270) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status of a pronoun in an exception phrase headed by *but, except, save*, when the exception phrase is extraposed to clause-final position (cf Moltmann 1992: 373, 376)



Since prepositions like *but, save,* and *except* do not assign any θ-role to a following noun phrase, neither the Pos-Case nor the Arg-Case constraint impose any case requirements on a pronoun that appears in an exception structure. The choice of pronoun forms in this environment should therefore be determined entirely by Def-Case, and other, non-case related constraints.

While the Def-Case constraint predicts that all pronouns in surface positions not covered by Pos-Case should appear in their objective case form, the Relative Positional Coding constraints, which will be discussed in Chapter 8, call for the robust form of a pronoun in c-commanded positions within a phrase, which may explain why we tend to find instances of *I* after *but, save, except.*

In exception structures where the PP appears adjacent to the noun phrase (271), another possible source of nominative pronoun forms could be a reanalysis of the preposition as a coordinate conjunction.

(271) Examples of nominative pronoun forms after *save*, where the exception constructions could potentially be analysed as a coordinate

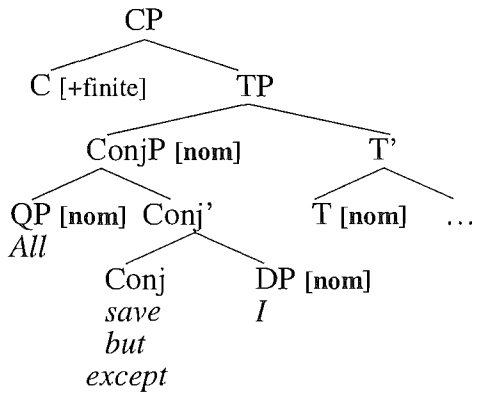
a. All, save I, were at rest (Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, Everyman, 1818: 143) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 230]

b. Ther every wight save he ... was with the leoun frete (Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales* in Skeat's six-volume edition, Group B: 473) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 229]

This kind of reanalysis appears to be quite common, and can be seen in the history of the coordinating conjunction *and*: According to the OED, *and* derives from the Latin preposition *ante* 'before', and as Gelderen (1997: 190-193) observes, *and* sometimes behaved like a preposition in earlier periods of English (especially in Old English).[124] Similarly, the preposition *with* appears to be treated as a coordinating conjunction in some contexts and triggers plural agreement with the verb.

If *save* has the status of a coordinating conjunction in examples like (271a-b), the pronoun following *save* will be linked to nominative Arg-Case, and will also check nominative Pos-Case (272), provided we assume that coordinates are transparent to case (cf. Section 4.11.2 for further discussion of pronoun case in coordinates).

(272) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status of a pronoun in following *but, except, save* in [Spec, TP] of a finite clause, if the exception construction is reanalysed as a coordinate[125]



[124] I would like to thank Kate Kearns (p.c.) for drawing my attention to the etymology of *and*.

[125] For a more detailed discussion of the quantifier *all* see Section 4.16.3.

4.13 Pronouns following *not*

4.13.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

Jespersen (1946: 445) observes that pronouns following *not* tend to surface in their objective form in emphatic contexts (273).

(273) Examples of objective pronoun forms after *not* in emphatic contexts

a. We shan't hang upon any misunderstanding. Not **us** (H.G. Wells, *Ann Veronica*, London 1909: 338) [Jespersen 1946: 446]

b. you were all in the same room together, were not you? 'No indeed! not **us**.' (Jane Austen, *Sense and sensibility*, London [1811]: 269) [Jespersen 1946: 446]

Erdmann (1978: 69) reports a similar trend for pronouns after *not* in contrastive constructions such as (274).

(274) Example of an objective pronoun form after *not* in a contrastive construction[126]

'Your son stole it, not **me**.' (Alan Sillitoe. 1969 [1967]. *A tree on fire*. Pan Books: 233) [Erdmann 1978: 69]

In contrastive contexts, nominative pronoun forms are most likely to occur after *not* when the whole construction appears as part of a coordinate preceding the finite verb (275).

(275) Examples where contrastive *not* + pronoun appear as part of a coordinate preceding a finite verb[127]

a. Heauen, and not **wee**, haue safely fought to day (Shakespeare *Henry IV, Part 2*: IV. ii.121) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 140]

b. God, and not **wee**, hath... (Quarto version of the above quote) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 140]

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[126] Note that this construction bears a strong resemblance to bare argument ellipsis (cf. Section 4.10). However, in the absence of the (clausal) conjunction *but* before *not*, the pronoun is more likely to be analysed as a simple phrase than as the remnant of ellipsis. The pronoun in (274) would thus appear to have more in common with pronouns in exception constructions (cf. Section 4.12) than with pronouns in stripped clauses.

[127] While the occurrence of the nominative *we* in (275a) could be argued to be due to agreement between the pronoun and the following verb, the example in (275b) indicates that the use of nominatives after *not* does not depend on the presence of verb agreement.

In emphatic contexts, nominatives are most common when the antecedent is a nominative pronoun (276). However, we also find examples where the antecedent of a nominative pronoun following *not*, is a proper noun (277).

(276) Examples of nominative pronoun forms in emphatic constructions where the pronoun following *not* is identical to its antecedent[128]

a. But I didn't follow his advice, not **I** (John Galsworthy, *Man of property*: 103) [Visser 1963: 56]

b. Who, I rob? I a theefe? Not **I** (Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 1*: I. ii. 153) [Jespersen 1946: 445]

c. Were I a Steam-engine, wouldst thou take the trouble to tell lies of me? Not **thou**! (Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor resartus*, London [1839]: 169) [Jespersen 1946: 446]

d. They wouldn't touch us ... Not **they** (John Galsworthy, *The Freelands*, London 1916 (Nelson): 255) [Jespersen 1946: 446]

(277) Example of a nominative pronoun following *not* in an emphatic context, where the antecedent of the pronoun is a proper noun

Meg don't know what he likes. Not **she**! (Charles Dickens, *Christmas books*, London 1892 (Macmillan): 30) [Jespersen 1946: 446]

The examples cited in existing studies (e.g. Jespersen 1946, Jespersen & Haislund 1949, Visser 1963: 56) suggest that the 1sg nominative *I* occurs more commonly after *not* than non-1sg nominative forms.

[128] In examples such as (276a), *not* + pronoun would appear to have a status similar to right-dislocated pronouns (cf. Section 4.3.1). However, as the punctuation in (276b-d) indicates, the sequence *not* + pronoun in this context is most likely to be preceded by a noticeable pause. This suggests that *not* + pronoun generally forms an independent constituent in emphatic contexts (cf. Section 4.3.1, footnote 26).

4.13.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

If we assume that *not* resembles a preposition or conjunction in the examples cited in 4.13.1, pronouns following *not* could be analysed either as remnants of extensive ellipsis,[129] or as DP complements of *not*.

Any ellipsis approach would predict that a pronoun following *not* is influenced by Arg-Case, because the missing predicate would be present at Semantic Form. Pronouns interpreted as the subject of an ellipted finite clause could potentially be argued to check nominative Pos-Case with C and T (cf. Section 4.4.2). However, initial *not* never cooccurs with a finite verb, and the construction is temporally dependent on the preceding clause. This suggests that constituents following *not* lack a TP-layer.[130] If no TP-layer is present in a *not* + pronoun construction, a pronoun interpreted as the subject will be unable to check nominative Pos-Case, and will instead be influenced by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective pronoun forms. Since Arg-Case tends to override Def-Case requirements in Present-Day English (cf. Section 3.3.2), an ellipsis approach to *not* + pronoun constructions can readily account for the occurrence of nominative pronoun forms after *not* in (276)-(277). The use of objective pronoun forms in examples like (273)-(274) is more difficult to predict in an ellipsis approach, and could only result from the interaction of Arg-Case and Def-Case with non-case constraints such as the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them*.

If a pronoun following *not* is analysed as a simple DP, rather than the remnant of ellipsis, the predictions of the three case constraints will depend on whether *not* + pronoun appears as part of a coordinate (278), or as an independent constituent (279).

(278) Heauen, and not wee, haue safely fought to day (Shakespeare *Henry IV, Part 2*: IV. ii.121) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 140]

[129] Compare Jespersen's (1946: 445) observation that expressions like *not he* are the equivalent of *he won't, he isn't*, with the *not* negating the unexpressed predicate rather than the pronoun itself.
[130] Compare the structure proposed for stripped clauses in Section 4.10.

(279) a. 'Your son stole it, not **me**.' (Alan Sillitoe. 1969 [1967]. *A tree on fire.* Pan Books: 233) [Erdmann 1978: 69]

b. We shan't hang upon any misunderstanding. Not **us** (H.G. Wells, *Ann Veronica*, London 1909: 338) [Jespersen 1946: 446]

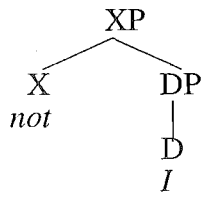
Assuming that coordinates are transparent to outside case influences (cf. Section 4.11.2), a pronoun following *not* in a subject coordinate (278) will be linked to nominative Arg-Case and will also check nominative Pos-Case if the subject coordinate occupies [Spec, TP] of a finite clause at Spell-Out.

When *not* + pronoun form an independent constituent (279), the pronoun will receive neither Arg-Case nor Pos-Case, but will instead be influenced by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective pronoun forms in all contexts not covered by Pos-Case.

By treating a pronoun following *not* as a simple DP, we can thus account both for the occurrence of nominative pronoun forms in sentences like (278), and for the use of objective pronoun forms in (279a-b). However, the nominatives in (276), and especially (277), are unexpected in this approach.

As we will see in Chapter 8, the nominative forms *I, they*, and also *thou*, could be argued to occur in after *not* because the Relative Positional Coding constraints requires asymmetrically c-commanded elements to be phonologically robust. *I, they*, and *thou* all contain a diphthong, which renders them more robust than the nominative forms *he, she, we*, and the objective forms *me* and *thee*. We would thus predict that *I, they*, and *thou* should be more likely to occur as the complement of *not* (280) than the less robust forms *he, she, we, me,* and *thee*.[131]

(280) Tree diagram illustrating the asymmetric c-command relationship between *not* and a pronoun appearing as its complement[132]



While the use of *I, thou,* and *they* after *not* could be due to the influence of Relative Positional Coding, the occurrence of the gracile nominative *she* in (281) is

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[131] Compare the occurrence *I* after *but, save*, and *except* (cf. Section 4.12.2), and the preference for *I, him, her* in final conjuncts of coordinates (cf. Section 4.11.2).

[132] See Section 8.2 and Kayne (1994) for a more detailed discussion of asymmetric c-command.

entirely unexpected in a DP approach to pronouns after *not*, even though it is readily captured in an ellipsis approach.

(281) Meg don't know what he likes. Not **she**! (Charles Dickens, *Christmas books*, London 1892 (Macmillan): 30) [Jespersen 1946: 446]

This suggests that at least some speakers analyse pronouns after *not* as remnants of extensive ellipsis rather than DP complements.

4.14 Pronouns following *than, as, like*

4.14.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

Data cited by Visser (1963: 340) suggest that in Old English, a pronoun following *þonne* 'than' in a comparative generally surfaced in the nominative case (282).

(282) a. ic eom betre þonne **heo**
1sg.NOM am better than 3sgF.NOM
'I am better than she/her.'
(Old English Riddles (Ex. Bk., Krapp): 40.28) [Visser 1963: 340]

b. He is strengra ðonne **ic**
3sgM.NOM is stronger than 1sg.NOM
'He is stronger than I/me.'
(Old English Gospel: Matthew III.ii) [Visser 1963: 340]

In Present-Day English, on the other hand, both objective and nominative pronoun forms are possible, as can be seen from the translations of the Old English examples.

According to Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 236), 'the construction with the obl. [i.e. objective] case is now so universal as to be considered the normal one' with *than* (283), and the nominatives in at least some of the examples in (284) 'have certainly been called forth by an artificial reaction against the natural tendencies of the language'.

(283) Instances of objective pronoun forms after *than* (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 231f)

a. My sister, though many years younger than **me**, is at least old enough (Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*, London 1782 [1749]: 1.49)

b. our cousin, who was himself in little better circumstances than **me** (Oliver Goldsmith, *The vicar of Wakefield*, 1766 (Facsimile ed., London 1885), or ed. Stein, Oxford 1922: 2.3)

c. I am ... mightier than **thee** (Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Poetical works*, ed. Hutchinson, Oxford 1904: 262)

d. the swordbearer's better than **him** (Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son*, London 1887 (Ch. D. ed.) [1848]: 23)

e. A woman does not complain that her brother, who is younger than **her**, gets their common father's estate (James Boswell, *Life of S. Johnson*, ed. Fitzgerald, London 1900 [1791]: 2.87)

f. the Carbottle people were quite as badly off as us, only they are poorer than **us** (Anthony Trollope, *The Duke's children*, Tauchnitz [1880]: 3.31)

g. he seems mightier far than **them** (George Gordon Byron, *Poetical works*, ed. E.H. Coleridge, London 1905: 628)

(284) Instances of nominative pronoun forms after *than* (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 234)

a. it was enough to have terrify'd a bolder man than **I** (Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 1719 (Facsimile ed., London 1883); 347)

b. I thought Heathcliff himself less guilty than **I** (Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*, London 1867 (1847); 230)

c. To a thinner man than **I**, or from a stouter man than **he**, the question might have been offensive (James R. Lowell, *My study windows*, London (Scott) (1871); 64)

d. I love and am loved by a better man than **he** (Arthur Conan Doyle, *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, Tauchnitz edition, 1893-1905; 53)

e. he did not believe himself better than **they** because he had not yielded to their temptations (Hugh Walpole, *Captives*, London 1920; 85)

As we will see in Section 4.14.2, the objective pronoun forms in (283) are expected if the pronoun following *than* has the status of a simple DP, while the

nominatives in (284) can be accounted for by assuming that the pronoun is the subject of an ellipted clause. However, the use of a nominative in (285) is problematic for both an ellipsis and a DP approach to pronouns after *than*, as they would both predict objective pronoun forms in this context.

(285) Example of a nominative that defies both ellipsis and DP analyses of pronouns after *than* (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 234)

I hope I shall see an end of him; for my soul, yet I know not why; hates nothing more than **he**. (Shakespeare, *As you like it*: I. i. 171)

The ready occurrence of both nominative and objective pronoun forms after *as* in equative constructions (286)-(287), suggests that pronouns following *as* may also be analysed either as remnants of ellipsis (286) or as simple DP complements of *as* (287).

(286) Instances of nominative pronoun forms after *as*, which can be accounted for by an ellipsis account (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 231)

a. things of more waight Then fits a prince so young as **I** to bear (Marlowe, *Edward the Second*, ed. Tucker Brooke, Oxford 1910: 1384)

b. Harrow School was disgraced by so disreputably dirty a boy as **I** (Anthony Trollope, *Autobiography*, World's Classics, Oxford 1923 [1883]: 4)

c. [dost thou think] I cannot bear another son As good as **thou** (Robert Bridges, *Eros and Psyche*, London 1894 (1885): 95)

d. she will be married to a man as bad as **he** (Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*, Macmillan, London 1900 (1839): 642)

e. because of finding no one so charitable as **she** (George Meredith, *The Egoist*, London 1892 (1879): 244)

f. and 't is not hard, I think, For [men so old as **we**] to keep the peace (Shakespeare, *Romeo & Juliet*: I. ii. 2)

(287) Instances of objective pronoun forms after *as* in equatives involving adjectives, where an ellipsis account would predict nominative case (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 231f)

a. is shee as tall as **me**? (Shakespeare, *Anthony and Cleopatra*: III. iii. 14)

b. when Florence was as little as **me** (Charles Dickens, *Dombey and son*, London, 1887 (1848): 60)

c. I shall be obliged if you will not get in the same carriage as **me** (William Somerset Maugham, *Plays*, Tauchnitz: 3. 98)

d. you ate about five times as much as **me** (Arnold Bennett, *Old wives' tale*, Tauchnitz 1909 [1908]: 2.24)

e. The nations not so blest as **thee** Must in their turn to tyrants fall (Thomson, Rule Britannia)

f. the Carbottle people were quite as badly off as **us** (Anthony Trollope, *The Duke's children*, Tauchnitz [1880]: 3.31)

According to Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 233), *like* is generally followed by pronouns in the objective case, although we do also find nominative pronoun forms in this context (288), especially when the pronoun appears as part of a coordinate (289).

(288) Instances of nominative pronoun forms after *like* (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 233f)

a. To think that a most unambitious slave, Like **thou**, shouldst dance and revel on the grave Of Liberty (Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Poetical works*, ed. Hutchinson, Oxford 1904: 577)

b. the kind of a gentleman that appeals to [a girl like **she**] (Loos, *Gentlemen marry brunettes*: 147)[133]

c. They, like **we**, were waiting for the verdict (Vizetelly, *With Zola in England*: 211)

[133] As Kate Kearns (p.c.) points out, the use of the nominative in this example is likely to be a deliberate instance of hypercorrection.

(289) Examples where *like* is followed by the coordinate *you and I* (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 233f)

a. men, who like [**you** and **I**] stand pretty much alone (T. Huxley, *Life and letters*, London 1900: 1. 289)

b. a pair of old bachelors like [**you** and **I**] may be excused (Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure island*, London, (Cassell) [1882]: 64)

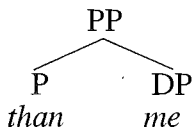
c. Hard-working people like [**you** and **I**] have to be punctual (Warwick Deeping, *Three rooms*, London 1930: 326)

Wales (1996: 97f) draws attention to a suggestion in the literature that 3ps pronouns are more likely to take the objective case in *than*-comparatives than 1ps pronouns. Wales (1996: 98) herself did not find any evidence to support this hypothesis in the Survey of English Usage corpus, but she comments that the 1sg nominative *I* seems considerably better than the 1pl nominative *we* after *than*.

4.14.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

As mentioned in Section 4.14.1, the sequence *than DP* could either be analysed as a preposition followed by a DP (290), or as a preposition followed by the subject of an elliptical finite clause (291).[134]

(290) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic position of a pronoun following *than* in a non-ellipsis approach to *than*-comparatives



In (290), the DP appears in a position not covered by Pos-Case (cf. Chapter 2 on the case properties of prepositions). Since *than* does not take the following DP as its argument, the DP also fails to be linked to Arg-Case. This means that the surface form of a pronoun following *than* will be constrained only by (objective) Def-Case.[135] The use of objective pronoun forms after *than* would be further

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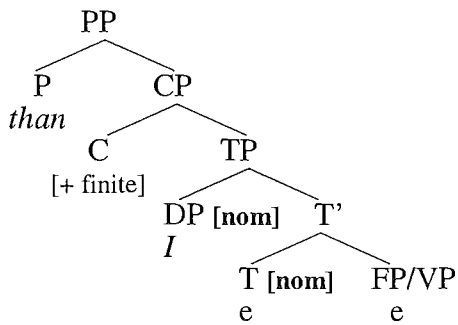
[134] Compare Jespersen & Haislund's (1949: 227f) suggestion that *than* and *as* could be analysed either as 'conjunctions' or as prepositions.

[135] Compare Sobin's (1997: 334f, 337) suggestion that *than* lacks the head feature that triggers case checking between argument-taking prepositions and their DP complements. The post-*than* pronoun

reinforced by the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them* in all strong pronoun contexts.

In an ellipsis approach, the pronoun has the same syntactic status as the DP it is compared to (291).

(291) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic and case status of a pronoun following *than* in an ellipsis approach, if the pronoun functions as the subject of the ellipted predicate



As (291) illustrates, a pronoun following *than* is able to check nominative Pos-Case in an ellipsis approach if the ellipted clause is assumed to be finite, and the pronoun is analysed as occupying [Spec, TP], because T must be present at Spell-Out to license the empty FP/VP.[136]

Chao (1987: 65-74) argues that LF reconstruction is obligatory for any predicates that are missing at Spell-Out in ellipsis constructions. If comparatives and equatives are analysed as involving ellipsis, the pronoun following *than* or *as* will therefore be predicted to receive Arg-Case from the missing embedded predicate.

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in the comparatives can only check case through the default accusative rule (i), and is therefore also susceptible to a nominative virus (ii).

(i) The Default Accusative Rule (Sobin 1997: 336)
If: ...[$_{NP}$ ACC]...
1
then: check ACC on 1.

(ii) The '*...than I*' Rule (Sobin 1997: 337)
If: ...than [$_{Pm}$ +1, -pl, NOM]...
1 2
then: check NOM on 2.

[136] Cf. Lobeck (1995) and Merchant (2001) for the licensing of ellipted constituents: ellipsis always affects phrases, and the ellipted constituent must be governed by a functional head specified for strong agreement.

Prescriptive grammars stipulate that *like* should only take noun phrase complements, which would mean constructions involving *like* could only be given the analysis in (290). However, *like* quite readily takes a clausal complement in Present-Day English (292), which suggests that an ellipsis analysis should be possible for *like* + pronoun.

(292) Examples of *like* + clause (Jespersen 1946: 358f)

a. I was like [I was last night] (William Thackeray, *The history of Pendennis*, Tauchnitz ed., [1848-50]: 2.317)

b. Nobody will miss her like [I shall] (Charles Dickens, letter written 7-1-1841, in John Forster, *Life of Charles Dickens* (Chapman and Hall) [1871-74]: 58)

c. He can't write like [he used to] (George Gissing, *The New Grub Street*, London 1908 [1891]: 217)

d. she'll never be like [she was] (Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*, London 1867 [1847]: 123)

e. How have he and Margery been getting on lately? - Oh, all right, like [they always have] (William Somerset Maugham, *Plays*, Tauchnitz ed.: 4.273)

The case properties of *than, as, like* comparatives/equatives are quite similar to the case properties of exception constructions involving *but, save, except*: Both types of constructions involve focus prepositions, which do not take arguments, and are unable to check Pos-Case. And in both constructions the pronoun is asymmetrically c-commanded by the preposition, which may explain why the robust 1sg nominative form *I* is favoured in both contexts.
However, comparatives and exception constructions do differ in certain respects:

Than, as, like comparatives/equatives can be given an alternative analysis where the following noun phrase is treated as the subject of an ellipted finite clause. Such an ellipsis analysis is not available for exception constructions.

On the other hand, *but/except/save* + pronoun can appear immediately after the associated argument in the matrix clause, and may thus give rise to surface strings that are reminiscent of coordinates. Such a coordinate analysis is considerably less plausible for comparatives and equatives.

4.15 Pronoun case after *only*

When *only* + pronoun appears in a canonical argument position, the pronoun always surfaces in the same case as a corresponding lone pronoun (293).

(293) Examples of pronouns after *only* in argument position

[Only I] had remembered to bring my notes.

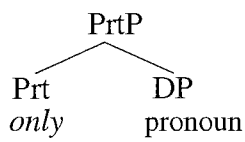
When the combination of *only* + pronoun appears in right-dislocated position, on the other hand, the pronoun will tend to surface in the objective case, no matter what its argument status (294).

(294) Examples of pronouns after *only* in right-dislocated position

Nobody thought much of him, [only **me**] (P.H. Johnson. 1971 [1968]: *Catherine Carter*. Penguin Books: 102) [Erdmann 1978: 69]

Bayer (1999) suggests that focus particles like *only* may project their own Particle Phrase (PrtP), which either dominates the following DP, or is contained within the DP. When *only* takes scope over the whole DP, as in the pronoun examples we are concerned with here, it is best analysed as the head of a PrtP dominating DP (295).

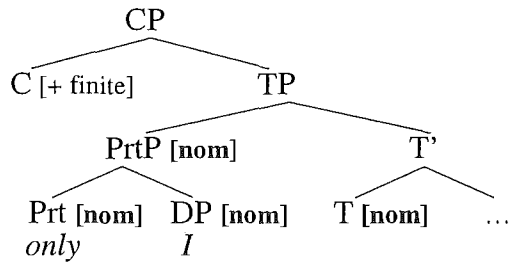
(295) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status of a pronoun following *only*



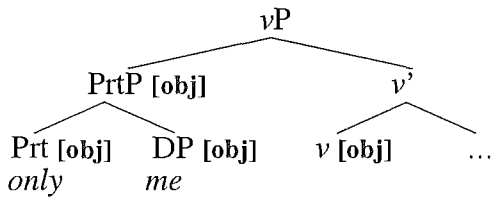
The choice of pronoun forms after *only* suggests that the phrase projected by *only* is transparent to outside case influences, just like ConjP. The three case constraints will thus make the following predictions for pronoun case after *only*:

A pronoun following *only* will receive nominative Arg-Case if it is the highest argument of a predicate, and objective Arg-Case if it is a lower argument of a verb or preposition. The pronoun will also check nominative Pos-Case requirements when the PrtP appears in [Spec, TP] of a finite clause at Spell-Out (296), and objective Pos-Case when the PrtP occupies [Spec, *v*P] (297).

(296) Tree diagram illustrating how a pronoun in a Particle Phrase (PrtP) headed by *only* will check nominative Pos-Case when the PrtP appears in [Spec, TP] of a finite clause at Spell-Out



(297) Tree diagram illustrating how a pronoun in a Particle Phrase (PrtP) headed by *only* will check objective Pos-Case when the PrtP appears in [Spec, *v*P] at Spell-Out



The distribution of *only* + pronoun in V-particle constructions suggests that a pronoun does not need to raise to [Spec, *v*P], and indeed preferentially remains in VP-internal position if it is modified by *only* (298).[137]

(298) a. ??They threw [only me] out.
b. They threw out [only me].

When the pronoun modified by *only* remains in [Spec, VP], as in (298b), it will be subject to the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective forms in all positions not covered by Pos-Case, and the Arg-Case constraint, which requires objects of verbs to surface in their objective form.

When the Particle Phrase appears in right-dislocated position, the pronoun will be unable to check either Pos-Case or Arg-Case, and will only be influenced by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for an objective case form. The

[137] See Section 2.2.2.1 for details about word order in V-particle constructions.

inapplicability of Pos-Case and Arg-Case renders the pronoun particularly susceptible to non-case influences, such as the trend towards invariant strong forms (all objective), and the trend towards in *I, him, her, us, them* in asymmetrically c-commanded position.

4.16 The case of modified pronouns

4.16.1 Pronouns modified by adjectives

4.16.1.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

While all non-neuter pronouns may follow adjectives in English (299), only 1pl and 2pl pronouns are able to precede a modifying adjective (300).

(299) Examples of pronouns that follow modifying adjectives

a. Poor little **I / me** (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 134)

b. Good old **you**! (Quirk et al. 1985: 352)
Lucky **you**! (*you* = 2sg or 2pl)

c. Silly **him / her**!

d. Poor Druids! and Poor **us**! (Fox: 2.147)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 277f]

e. 'The French haven't any of our inhibitions about dealing with witnesses.' 'Lucky **them**, my lord.' (Dorothy L. Sayers, *The nine tailors*, Albatross 1934: 225) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 278]

(300) Examples of pronouns preceding a modifying adjective

a. **we/us** uneducated/poor
b. **you** British (*you* = 2pl)

Pronouns premodified by an adjective most frequently occur as independent nonsentential constituents (299). As (299) illustrates, pronouns tend to appear in their objective case forms in this context, although Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 134) seem to suggest that the 1sg nominative *I* is marginally possible (299a).

Although the construction usually forms an independent utterance, we do find some examples where a premodified pronoun appears as the object of a verb or preposition (301).

(301) Examples of pronouns following a modifying adjective, where the whole construction appears as the object of a verb or preposition

a. Such a lot of love and learning confronting [[poor **me**], who am so eager to lap it all in comfort] (Ivy Compton-Burnett, *More women than men*, (Gollancz) 1971 [1933]: 74) [Erdmann 1978: 78]

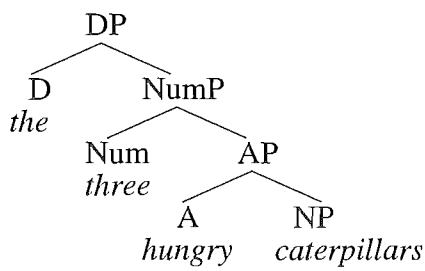
b. That you will here with [poor **us**] still remain (George Villiers, *The rehearsal*, Arber, 1671; 83) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 134]

When a pronoun precedes the modifying adjective, the adjective is usually interpreted as a restriction on the set of referents picked out by the pronoun (cf. Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 102). The case form of the pronoun will tend to match that of unmodified lone pronouns in the same position, but we also find instances of *us* in subject position, and *we* in objective contexts.

4.16.1.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case and Def-Case

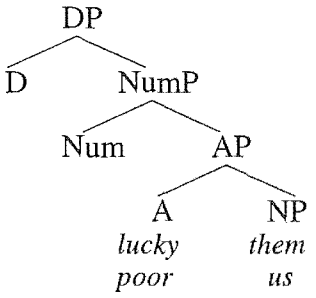
Abney (1987: 322-334) argues that prenominal adjectives are best analysed as taking the following noun as their complement (302).

(302) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic status and position of a prenominal adjective in the analysis proposed by Abney (1987)



If we assume that this is the only possible analysis for prenominal adjectives, then the occurrence of adjectives before pronouns in phrases like *lucky you* and *silly me* could be seen as evidence that (at least certain) pronouns are base-generated in N (cf. Cardinaletti 1994: 202-205), and may appear in N at Spell-Out (303).

(303) Tree diagram illustrating the surface position of a pronoun preceded by an adjective, if we assume that prenominal adjectives always take NP complements



Since the pronoun in (303) does not appear in D at Spell-Out, we would predict that it will not be as strongly influenced by Pos-Case and Arg-Case, because it is usually only the head of the highest layer of a nominal projection that is directly affected by the different case constraints.

If Pos-Case and Arg-Case are unable to percolate down to the head of NP, then a pronoun preceded by an adjective will be predicted to surface in the objective form required by the Def-Case constraint.

If Pos-Case and Arg-Case are assumed to be able to percolate to the head of NP, then surface form of the pronoun will depend on the argument structure status of the whole noun phrase, and the position of the DP at Spell-Out.

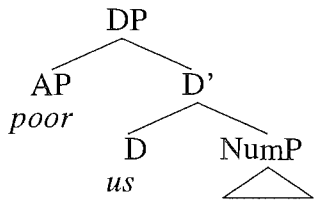
Both of these options would correctly predict that the pronoun should surface in the objective form when the DP appears as the object of a verb or preposition, or as an independent constituent (cf. Section 4.16.1.1).

An additional advantage of the analysis proposed by Cardinaletti (1994) is that it can predict that pronouns might be used as common nouns in phrases like (304).

(304) a. a whole new **you**
b. an older, wiser **me**
c. is it [a **he**] or [a **she**]

If we follow Postal (1969), Abney (1987: 284), and Longobardi (1994: 635) in assuming that pronouns are base-generated in D, then an adjective preceding a pronoun is most plausibly analysed as occupying [Spec, DP] (305).[138]

(305) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic relation between a pronoun and a preceding adjective, when the adjective has an appositive interpretation[139]



When premodified pronouns form nonsentential constituents, their surface form will be influenced primarily by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective pronoun forms in all positions not covered by Pos-Case. Since the pronoun does not receive either Pos-Case or Arg-Case when it appears independently, we might expect it to be particularly susceptible to non-case influences, especially the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them.*

A pronoun followed by an adjective will check nominative Pos-Case when the whole DP appears in [Spec, TP] of a finite clause at Spell-Out (306), and objective Pos-Case, when it appears in [Spec, *v*P] (307).[140]

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[138] Longobardi (1994: 628f) argues that in English proper nouns do not undergo overt raising to D, because when a proper noun appears with adjectival modifier, the adjective always precedes rather than follows the noun (i).

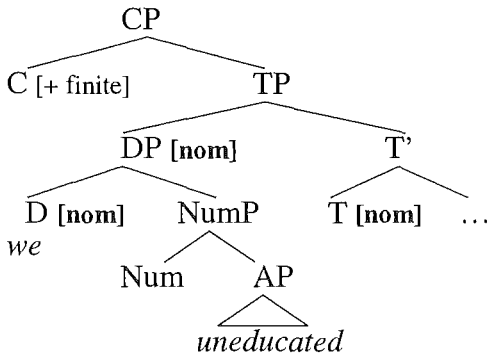
(i) a. [Old John] came in.
b. * [John$_i$ old t$_i$] came in.

However, if we assume that pronouns are base-generated in D and therefore occupy D when they are modified by adjectives with an appositional interpretation, then it seems just as plausible that proper nouns preceded by appositional adjectives should appear in D at Spell-Out. The ungrammaticality of (ib) could then be argued to arise from the semantic incompatibility between proper nouns and restrictive modifiers, rather than any syntactic constraints.

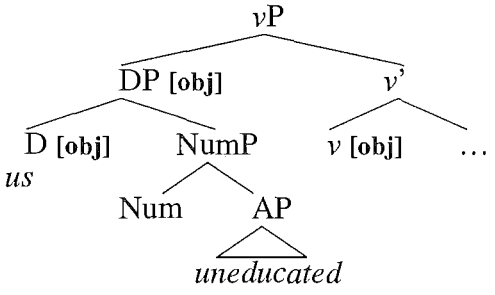
[139] In bare phrase structure theory, a head will only be able to project a specifier if it also takes a complement (cf. Hale & Keyser 1998). The presence of a premodifying adjective in [Spec, DP] will thus require the concomitant presence of an empty NumP. In Chapter 5, I will argue that the presence of a NumP complement sets strong pronouns apart from weak pronouns in English.

[140] Note that the adjective following the pronoun could either be analysed as occupying the head of an AP-layer between NumP and NP (as in the diagrams presented in (306) and (307)), or it could be treated as an adjunct to NumP (which would make its status similar to modifying PPs and restrictive relatives, and arguably also modifying NPs).

(306) Tree diagram illustrating how a pronoun followed by an adjective will check nominative Pos-Case when it occupies [Spec, TP] of a finite clause at Spell-Out



(307) Tree diagram illustrating how a pronoun followed by an adjective will check objective Pos-Case when it occupies [Spec, *v*P] at Spell-Out



The word order in V-particle constructions suggests that pronouns followed by an adjective need not raise to [Spec, *v*P] before Spell-Out (308).

(308) a. Society has always tried to shut [**us** underprivileged] out.
b. Society has always tried to shut out [**us** underprivileged].

If the DP headed by the pronoun remains in [Spec, VP], the surface form of the pronoun will be constrained by Arg-Case and Def-Case, but not by Pos-Case.

We might argue that 3pl pronouns are unable to occur with a restrictive adjective because the determiner *the* already provides a 3ps interpretation when it precedes an adjective (*the poor, the uneducated*) (cf. Abney 1987).

4.16.2 Pronouns followed by a numeral

4.16.2.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

In most of the examples listed by Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 141) the pronoun bears the same case as it would if it was unmodified (309)-(311). However we also find instances of objective pronoun forms when the pronoun appears as the subject of a finite clause (312).

(309) Example where a nominative pronoun modified by a numeral appears in finite subject position

And in our sight [**they** three] were taken vp (Shakespeare, *Comedy of errors*; I. i. 111) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

(310) Examples where an objective pronoun modified by a numeral appears as the complement of a preposition

a. I am boy to [**them** all three], but all they three ... could not be man to me (Shakespeare *Henry V*; III. ii. 30) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

b. the fayrest of [**them** thre] (William Caxton, *Reynard the fox*, ed. Arber, (1481); 83) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

c. eche of [**them** V] (Thomas Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*, ed. O. Sommer, London 1889; 50) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

d. of [**them** III] (Thomas More, *Utopia*, translated ed., J.H. Lupton, Oxford 1895; 181) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

e. out of [**them** two] (Ben Jonson, The Mermaid Series; 3.247) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

(311) Examples where an objective pronoun modified by a numeral appears as the subject of a *to*-infinitive or small clause[141]

a. I want [**us** three] to meet, you and she and I (Oppenheim, *Pawns count*; 88) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

b. I want to see [**them** two] meet (George Bernard Shaw, *John Bull's other island*, London, 1907; 225) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

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[141] For a more detailed discussion of pronoun case in *to*-infinitives and small clauses, see Sections 4.7 and 4.8, respectively.

(312) Example where an objective pronoun modified by a numeral appears as the subject of a finite clause

[Us two] will lead the way (William Pett Ridge, *Name of Garland*, Tauchnitz [1907]: 138) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 276]

When a pronoun modified by a numeral appears in right-dislocation, it may surface in its nominative form, even if its antecedent is the (objective) subject of a small clause following the verb *let* (313).

(313) Examples of right-dislocated nominative pronouns followed by a numeral, where the antecedent of the pronoun is the subject of a small clause following *let*

a. let us not be ashamed, [**we** two], but only very proud (Alfred Sutro, *Five little plays*, London 1912: 96) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 238]

b. to persuade Richard to let us go alone - [**we** three], you know (J.D. Beresford, *Mount. Moon*; 6) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 238]

Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 141f) note that *them* + numeral 'is now generally avoided [in favour of *these/those/the*+numeral][142], because *them* is felt to be like the vg [= vulgar] use of *them* as an adjunct (them boys)'.
The occurrence of *them* with a following noun phrase and the tendency towards *those* in this context are discussed in further detail in Section 4.16.6 and in Chapter 7.

4.16.2.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

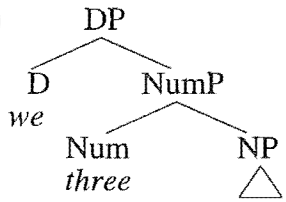
As discussed in Section 2.2.2.3, I am following Ritter (1991: 50-58) and Lobeck (1995: 80) in assuming that numerals head the functional projection NumP, which intervenes between DP and NP. When a pronoun is modified by a numeral, the pronoun always precedes the numeral (314).

(314) a. **we** three
b. * three **we**

142 A similar preference for *these/those* over *they* is found where the 3pl is modified by a relative clause (cf. Section 1.2.1.9. for further discussion)

This suggests that pronouns modified by numerals occupy D at Spell-Out (315).

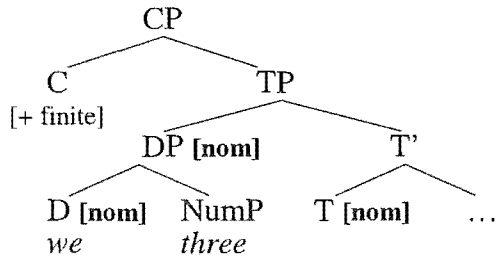
(315)



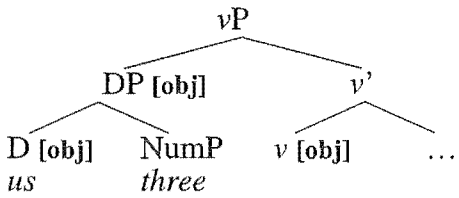
Since case always percolates to the head of the DP in a case checking position, the pronoun in D will be influenced by Arg-Case if the DP functions as the argument of a predicate. The Arg-Case constraint predicts that any subject will surface in the nominative, whereas the object of a verb or preposition will surface in the objective case.

The pronoun will also be subject to Pos-Case requirements if the whole DP appears in a Pos-Case position at Spell-Out (316)-(317).

(316) Tree diagram illustrating the Pos-Case status of a pronoun heading a DP in [Spec, TP]



(317) Tree diagram illustrating the Pos-Case status of a pronoun heading a DP in [Spec, vP]



Unlike lone object pronouns, pronouns modified by a numeral may either precede or follow the particle in a V-particle constructions (318), which suggests that a pronoun modified by a numeral may remain in [Spec, VP] at Spell-Out.

(318) a. You wouldn't throw [**us** three] out, would you?
b. You wouldn't throw out [**us** three], would you?

When a pronoun modified by a numeral appears in [Spec, VP], or as the complement of a preposition, it will be influenced by Def-Case rather than Pos-Case, and might therefore be more susceptible to non-case influences such as the trend towards invariant *us* and *them* and the preference for *we* and *they* in asymmetrically c-commanding positions.

4.16.3 Pronouns associated with the quantifiers *all* and *both*

4.16.3.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

When *all* or *both* follow a pronoun appearing as the subject of a finite clause, the pronoun generally surfaces in the nominative case (319).

(319) **We** all have our loyalties. (Quirk et al. 1985: 353)

When a pronoun followed by *all* or *both* appears as the object of a preposition, it will usually surface in its objective form (320).

(320) I am boy to **them** all three (Shakespeare *Henry V*; III. ii. 30)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

Unlike lone, unmodified pronouns, personal pronouns modified by a numeral, noun, or prepositional phrase, do not need to precede the quantifiers *all* and *both*, but may instead follow them (321)-(323).

(321) [Both **us** parents] were invited to the meeting.

(322) I am boy to them all three, but [all **they** three] ... could not be man to me
(Shakespeare *Henry V*; III. ii. 30) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 141]

(323) all the foure brethern, and [all **theym** of theyr companye] arayed themselfe
(Caxton. Aymon 78) [Mustanoja 1960: 129f]

The examples in (322)-(323) suggest that modified pronouns preceded by *all* may surface either in the nominative or in the objective case when they appear as the subject of a finite clause. It is important to bear in mind, though, that (323) is an example from Middle English, and also differs from (322) in that the quantifier-pronoun complex forms the second conjunct of a coordinate rather than appearing by itself.

When a pronoun associated with a quantifier appears as the subject of a V-*ing* construction, it may surface either in the genitive case (324) or in its nominative/objective form (325).[143]

(324) Examples of genitive pronoun forms followed by *all* and *both* in V-*ing* constructions that appear in prepositional complement position (Jespersen 1946: 129)

a. Em'ly was confused by [**our** all observing her] (Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, London 1897 (Macmillan) [1849-50]: 133)

b. The confusion that might arise from [**our** both addressing the same lady] (Richard B. Sheridan, *Dramatic works*, Tauchnitz: 56)

c. assurances of [**their** both being alive] (Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, London 1897 [1814]: 29)

(325) Example of nominative/objective pronoun forms followed by *all* in V-*ing* constructions that appear in prepositional complement position

Can I count on [**you** all holding your tongues]? (William Somerset Maugham, *Altogether* (Collected stories), London 1934: 1485) [Jespersen 1946: 135]

4.16.3.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

Potsdam (1998: 88-92), following Sportiche (1988), suggests that noun phrases associated with the quantifiers *all* and *both* are base-generated as a complement of the quantifier.

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[143] As Liz Pearce (p.c.) points out, the pronoun does not necessarily form a constituent with the quantifier at Spell-Out in (324)-(325). When perfective *have* is added to the V-*ing* construction, it may follow the quantifier (i), as would be expected if the pronoun and quantifier formed a constituent, but it may also intervene between the pronoun and the quantifier (ii).

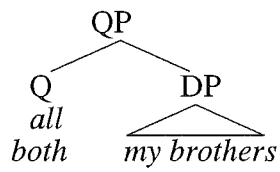
(i) ... by [**our** all having observed her]
...from [**our** both having addressed the same lady]
... of [**their** both having been alive]

(ii) ... by [**our** having all observed her]
... from [**our** having both addressed the same lady]
... of [**their** having both been alive]

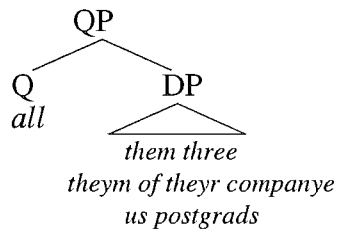
In Section 4.16.3.2, I will argue that pronouns forming a constituent with a following quantifier (i) occupy [Spec, QP] at Spell-Out, while pronouns separated from a following quantifier by intervening projections (ii) will be argued to have raised out of QP before Spell-Out.

Word order facts indicate that full noun phrases (326) and modified pronouns (327) may remain in post-Q position, but lone pronouns must raise past Q before Spell-Out.[144] According to Potsdam (1998: 92), the lowest surface position available to lone pronouns associated with a quantifier is [Spec, QP] (328).

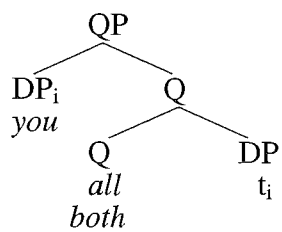
(326)



(327)



(328)



When a pronoun appears within QP at Spell-Out (327)-(328), it will only be able to check Pos-Case if we assume that QP is entirely transparent to outside case influences. In order to establish whether QP is transparent to Pos-Case or not, we will need to compare the case preferences for pronouns that have raised out of QP

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[144] Note the differences between *all* and *both* on the one hand, and *each* on the other: *each* must float, while *all* and *both* may form a constituent with an associated pronoun at Spell-Out

(i) They all took a candle.
They both took a candle.
They each took a candle. (Quirk et al. 1985: 353).

(ii) We've contacted [them all].
We've contacted [them both].
* We've contacted [them each].

(iii) [All us postgrads] are going to the conference.
[Both us parents] were invited to the meeting.
* [Each us witnesses] were interviewed separately.

with the case preferences for pronouns that clearly appear within QP. If QP is transparent to Pos-Case, we would expect a modified subject pronoun to be just as likely to surface in its nominative form when it appears after *all* (329) as when it has raised to [Spec, TP] by itself (330).

(329) a. [All **we** postgrads] are going to the meeting.
b. [All **us** postgrads] are going to the meeting.

(330) a. [**We** postgrads] are all going to the meeting.
b. [**Us** postgrads] are all going to the meeting.

While I did not include examples like (329) in my survey, the use of *we* after *all* in (329a) strikes me as considerably less idiomatic than the use of *we* in (330a), where the pronoun has raised out of [Spec, QP] into [Spec, TP]. This would suggest that QP is not (entirely) transparent to Pos-Case influences. At the same time, a pronoun within QP might be expected be able to receive Arg-Case, because it is the pronominal DP that functions as the argument of the predicate.

As illustrated by (330), a pronoun associated with a quantifier need not be adjacent to this quantifier at Spell-Out. This suggests that pronouns are able to move out of [Spec, QP] before Spell-Out. If a pronoun moves to the specifier of an agreement-related functional head, its surface form will be constrained by Pos-Case as well as Arg-Case, because it will be in a direct spec-head relationship with the functional head.

A pronoun that has moved from [Spec, QP] to [Spec, TP] in a finite clause will check nominative Pos-Case; a pronoun that has moved to [Spec, *v*P] will check objective Pos-Case; and a pronoun that has moved from [Spec, QP] to [Spec, DP] in a Poss-*ing* gerund will check genitive Pos-Case.

4.16.4 Pronouns followed by a PP

4.16.4.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

Quirk et al. (1985: 353) suggest that nominative pronoun forms may alternate with objective forms when a pronoun is modified by a PP (331).

(331) a. **we** of the modern age
b. **us** over here (annotated as 'familiar')
(Quirk et al. 1985: 353)

Unfortunately Quirk et al. (1985) do not provide a context illustrating the position of the modified pronoun in the clause, but it seems likely that the annotation 'familiar' with (331b) refers to the use of *us over here* as the subject of a finite clause.

Further examples cited in the literature suggest that pronouns modified by a PP may surface in the nominative case if they appear in apposition to a noun phrase (332), while objective forms occur when the pronoun + PP complex appears as the subject of a past-participle construction (333).

(332) Example where a nominative pronoun modified by a PP appears in apposition to a noun phrase

I heard one of my examiners - [**he** of the braided surtout] - whisper to his co-professor (Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, London 1867 (1852); 386) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225f]

(333) Example where an objective pronoun modified by a PP appears as the subject of an absolutive past-participle construction

the most maddening of masters [[**him** before me] always excepted] (Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, London 1867 [1852]: 343) [Jespersen 1946: 49]

As we will see in Section 4.16.4.2, PPs modifying a noun or pronoun may be either 'restrictive' (cf. (331b) & (333)), or 'adjectival' (cf. (331a) & (332)). The paucity of examples in the literature makes it difficult to determine whether the nature of the modifying PP has any bearing on the case of the pronoun preceding it, but it is interesting to note that the nominative pronouns in (331a) and (332) appear with an 'adjectival' PP, while the objective pronouns in (331b) and (333) are modified by a 'restrictive' PP.

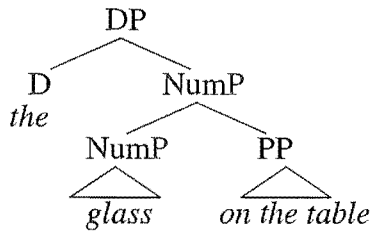
4.16.4.2 Predictions and limitations of a Pos-Case, Arg-Case, and Def-Case

Lobeck (1995: 79) argues that PPs modifying a noun are either adjoined to NumP or to NP. 'Restrictive' PPs, which can only occur within definite noun phrases (334), adjoin to NumP (335).[145]

[145] The distinction between these two types of PPs goes back to Rothstein (1988).

(334) a. He brought me [the/every glass on the table].
b. * He brought me [a/some glass on the table].

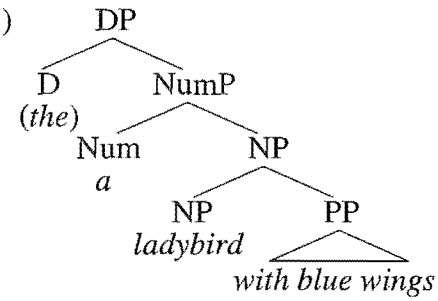
(335)



'Adjectival' PPs, which occur with both definite and indefinite noun phrase (336), are adjoined to NP (337).

(336) a. He brought me [the/every ladybird with blue wings].
b. He brought me [a/some ladybird with blue wings].

(337)



Since both restrictive and adjectival PPs appear as adjuncts to a projection below D, the difference between the two types of PP will not have any bearing on pronoun case predictions. The case of a pronoun modified by a PP will be influenced by the Arg-Case constraint whenever the whole DP functions as the argument of a predicate, and by Pos-Case, if the DP appears in a position covered by Pos-Case, such as [Spec, TP].

A pronoun modified by a PP will be influenced by nominative Arg-Case and Pos-Case when it functions as the (preverbal) subject of a finite clause. If the pronoun appears as the subject of an absolutive past-participle construction (333), it will receive nominative Arg-Case, but it will be unable to enter into Pos-Case checking, and will instead be influenced by objective Def-Case.

The word order in V-particle constructions (338) suggests that object pronouns modified by a PP tend to remain in [Spec, VP].

(338) a. I notice that you didn't throw out [**him** with the expensive sunglasses].
b.??I notice that you didn't throw [**him** with the expensive sunglasses] out.

This means that pronouns modified by a PP will be influenced by objective Def-Case rather than objective Pos-Case, when they appear as the object of a verb. The same applies to modified pronouns appearing as the complement of a preposition.

An appositive pronoun modified by a PP (332) could be argued to inherit the case of the head it is adjoined to, through semantically licensed case agreement (cf. Section 3.8.3).[146]

The case-based approach outlined here correctly predicts the use of the nominative form *we* when (331a) appears the subject of a finite clause, and it can also capture the occurrence of the nominative *he* in (332).

At the same time, the three case constraints alone are unable to account for the use of objective pronoun forms in contexts where the pronoun modified by a PP functions as the subject of a finite (331b) or non-finite clause (333). Since the influence of Arg-Case generally outweighs the influence of Def-Case in Present-Day English, we would expect all pronominal subjects to surface in their nominative form. The use of objective pronoun forms in subject position thus indicates that pronouns modified by a PP are influenced by additional non-case constraints, such as the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them.*

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[146] The use of *he* before a modifying PP would be further reinforced by the preference for the gracile pronoun forms *me, he, she, we, they* in asymmetrically c-commanding positions. Since a pronoun in D asymmetrically c-commands any modifying PP, we would expect the 3sg pronoun in (332) to surface in the gracile form *he*, rather than the robust form *him* (see Section 8.2 for a more detailed discussion of the gracile/robust distinction).

4.16.5 Pronouns followed by a *self*-reflexive

4.16.5.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

As noted by Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 225), pronouns followed by a *self*-reflexive tend to surface in the nominative, regardless of their position in the sentence. Thus we find instances of nominatives followed by a *self*-reflexive in absolutive small clauses (339a) and in the focus of *it*-clefts where the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb (339b). Instances of objective pronoun forms followed by a *self*-reflexive are comparatively rare, and appear to be confined to objective contexts (340).

(339) Examples of nominative pronouns followed by *self*-reflexives

a. And shall the figure of God's Maiestie ... Be iudg'd by subiect, and inferior breathe, And [**he** himself] not present? (Shakespeare, *Richard II*; IV. i. 129) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 239f]

b. It was [**she** herself] he wanted to see.
It was [**he** himself] he wanted to see. (Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 255)

(340) Example of an objective pronoun followed by a *self*-reflexive

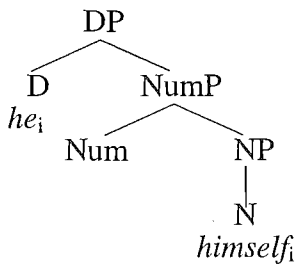
No one goes in there without an invitation from [**him** himself]
(W.B. Maxwell, *Gabrielle*, London 1926: 92)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 171]

4.16.5.2 Predictions and limitations of Pos-Case, Arg-Case, and Def-Case

A *self*-reflexive following a pronoun could be analysed as occupying N in the DP headed by the pronoun (341).[147]

(341) Tree diagram illustrating the syntactic relation between a pronoun and a following self-reflexive at Spell-Out

[147] If we assume that (strong) pronouns are base-generated in N, then the cooccurrence of a pronoun and a reflexive in the same DP could be seen as the result of Copy Spell Out (cf. Grohmann 2002).



If this analysis is correct, we would expect pronouns followed by *self*-reflexives to be subject to the same case influences as an unmodified lone pronoun. That is, a pronoun modified by a *self*-reflexive will receive nominative Arg-Case if it functions as the highest argument of a predicate, and objective Arg-Case if it is a lower argument of a verb or preposition.

If the DP containing the pronoun and *self*-reflexive appears in [Spec, TP], the pronoun will also be able to check nominative Pos-Case, and if the DP appears in [Spec, *v*P], the pronoun will check objective Pos-Case. In all other syntactic positions, the pronoun will be influenced by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective pronoun forms in Modern English.

The interaction of the three case constraints can account for the occurrence of the objective *him* in (340) and also for the occurrence of the nominative *he* in (339a), provided we assume that Arg-Case outweighs the Def-Case constraint. However, the use of *he* and *she* in the focus of the *it*-clefts in (339b) cannot be captured in a purely case-based approach, because the only case influence on the pronoun is the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective pronoun forms.

This suggests that the surface form of pronouns followed by a *self*-reflexive is at least partly influenced by non-case factors. Since the pronoun asymmetrically c-commands the *self*-reflexive in (341), we could see the occurrence of *he* and *she* in (339b) as further evidence that *he* and *she* are associated with asymmetrically c-commanding positions. Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 225) draw attention to another possible factor influencing the surface form of a pronoun followed by a corresponding reflexive when they suggest that such a pronoun will 'probably always have the nominative in order to avoid collocations like *him himself, her herself*'.

4.16.6 Pronouns followed by an NP (or NumP)

4.16.6.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

Wales (1996: 100) observes that *us* is favoured in informal spoken and written English when the 1pl pronoun is followed by an NP, even when the whole pronoun-NP construction appears as the subject of a finite clause (342). As Kjellmer (1986: 445) points out, even the OED recognises the use of *us NP* in finite subject position as acceptable in colloquial English, whereas the use of *them* in the same context tends to be stigmatised in Standard English (cf. also Wales 1996: 100).

(342) Examples where an objective pronoun + NP appears as the subject of a finite (embedded or matrix) clause[148]

a. [**Us** idlers] find it harder to admire Prince Charles (*Daily Mail*, 12 December 1993) [Wales 1996: 100]

b. Half a century later, [**us** chicks] had increased by another 1,000 million (LOB corpus) [Kjellmer 1986: 445]

c. You think [**us** old fellows] are fools (Jonathan Swift, *Polite conversation*, ed. Saintsbury, London 1892 [1738]: 116) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 272]

d. It also mentioned Harold Macmillan, a cypher which [**us** cryptographers] can recognise instantly; ... (*The Observer*, 26 July 1981) [Kjellmer 1986: 445]

At the same time, we find instances of the nominative form *we* + NP, when the pronoun construction appears as the complement of a preposition (343) or as the subject of a small clause following *let* (344).

[148] See Kjellmer (1986: 445) for further examples.

(343) Examples where a nominative pronoun + NP appears as the complement of a preposition

a. no mere mortal man is a match for [[**we** women], let alone Wonder Woman Maggie] (*The Daily Express*, 20 March 1990) [Wales 1996: 101]

b. I'm the only single one out of [**we** three musketeers] (Arthur W. Pinero, *The benefit of the doubt*, London 1895: 12) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 272]

c. the position of [[**we** elderly ones], who have to dwell among the sheepfolds] (Rosebery, *Fight to a finish*, 1914: 8 - no further details) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 272]

d. But to [**we** nostalgic post-Imperial powers] it was what the Scandinavian sexologists call an anticlimax (*The Guardian*, 27 March 1980) [Kjellmer 1986: 448]

(344) Example where a nominative pronoun + NP appears as the subject of a small clause following *let*

LET [[WE WORKERS] DECIDE] (sign displayed during an unofficial strike in London, 2 January 1979) [Kjellmer 1986: 448]

4.16.6.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

The predictions of the three case constraints depend on how we analyse the pronoun - NP sequence.

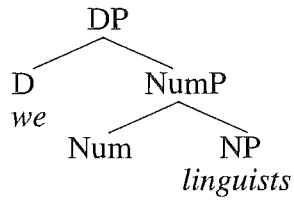
Abney (1987: 282ff) and Longobardi (1994: 636 n.31) see the co-occurrence of pronouns and nouns (345) as supporting evidence that pronouns are base generated in D and take NP complements.[149]

(345) a. you idiots/sailors
b. we tradesmen (all taken from Abney 1987: 282)

If this analysis is adapted to the approach to noun phrase structure adopted here, a phrase like *we linguists* will have the structure in (346).

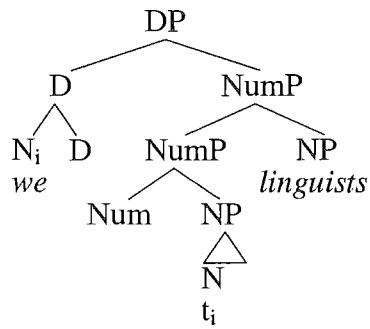
[149] See also Postal (1969).

(346)



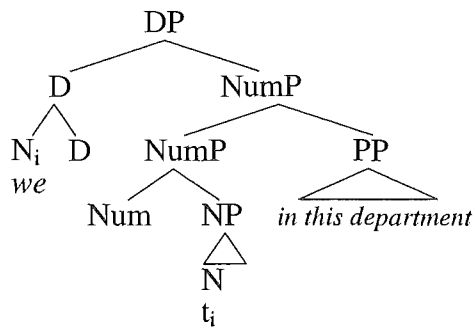
Cardinaletti (1994: 202-205) also assumes that the pronoun appears in D at Spell-Out, but suggests that any pronouns that can take modifiers are base-generated in N rather than D. This means that the noun following the pronoun in a phrase like *we linguists* will have to be analysed as an adjunct to NumP (or NP) (347).

(347)



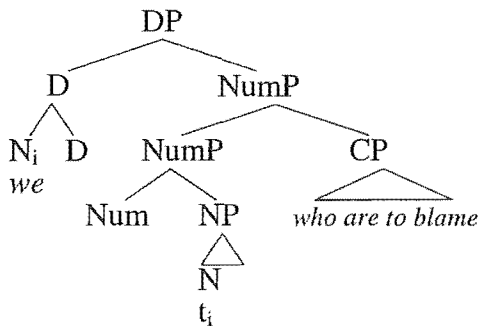
As Cardinaletti (1994: 203f) points out, the analysis in (347) allows us to capture the similarity between pronouns modified by an NP/NumP, and pronouns modified by a PP (348) or restrictive relative clause (349).[150]

(348)



[150] See Section 4.16.4 for more detail on pronouns modified by a PP, and Section 4.16.8 for a discussion of pronouns modified by relative clauses.

(349)



Although the syntactic properties of the pronoun and its relation with the following noun phrase in Cardinaletti's (1994) analysis differ quite dramatically from the analysis proposed by Abney (1987) and Longobardi (1994), the differences have little bearing on the predictions of the case constraints.

Since the pronoun heads the DP in both (346) and (347), the form of the pronoun in a pronoun-NP construction will be influenced by the Arg-Case constraint when the whole DP functions as an argument, and by the Pos-Case constraint whenever the DP appears in a Pos-Case position at Spell-Out.

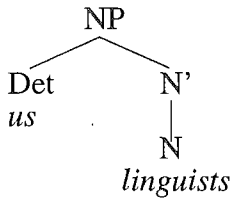
Like other modified pronouns, a pronoun modified by a noun may either precede or follow the particle in a V-particle construction. This suggests that an object pronoun modified by a noun may remain in [Spec, VP] throughout the derivation, where it will be influenced by the Def-Case rather than the Pos-Case constraint, just like the complement of a preposition.

Given that the Def-Case constraint is weaker than the Pos-Case constraint in Present-Day English, we might expect that a pronoun-NP appearing as the object of a verb or preposition will be more susceptible to non-case influences than a pronoun-NP that appears as the (preverbal) subject of a finite clause.

A drawback of analysing the pronoun as the head of the DP in all pronoun-NP constructions is that such an approach cannot readily account for the occurrence of *us linguists* and *them Australians* in subject position. Since Pos-Case is quite influential in Present-Day English, we would expect to find a clear preference for the nominative forms *we* and *they* when the pronoun-NP appears as the subject of a finite clause.

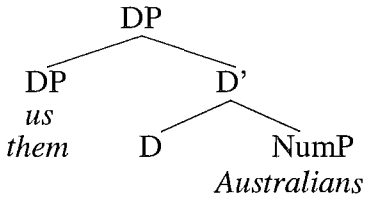
The occurrence of *us* and *them* in pronoun-NPs that appear as preverbal subjects would thus seem to indicate that the pronoun may appear in a position immune to Pos-Case influences. Interestingly, this is exactly what we would expect in a traditional NP-analysis of noun phrases, where the noun heads the phrase, and the determiner appears in the specifier position (350).

(350)



If we want to capture the basic properties of the NP-analysis but still retain the generalisation that definite noun phrases are DPs, we could assume that the pronoun in a pronoun-NP construction may be base-generated in [Spec, DP] and remains there throughout the derivation (351).

(351)



Since a pronoun in [Spec, DP] does not head the DP dominating the whole noun phrase, it will be unable to receive an Arg-Case or Pos-Case assigned to the whole DP (the case only percolates to the head of the phrase). It will also be unable to receive Arg-Case or Pos-Case from within the noun phrase, because it is not an argument of the noun *Australians*. This means that the surface form of the pronoun will be influenced only by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective pronoun forms.

4.16.7 Pronouns followed by an appositive

Kjellmer (1986: 447) argues that pronouns will always surface in the same case as corresponding lone pronouns when they are modified by an appositive noun phrase (352).

(352) a. [We, (who are) the parents of these children], think that ...
b. * [Us, (who are) the parents of these children], think that ...

However, while we might argue that the use of the nominative *he* in (353) arises from a general preference for nominative subjects in independent *to*-infinitives (cf. Section 4.7), we also find instances of nominative pronouns modified by an appositive in prepositional complement position (354), where lone pronouns generally surface in their objective form.

(353) Example where a nominative pronoun + appositive appears as the subject of an independent *to*-infinitive

Sir Jee was taken aback. [**He**, the chairman of the borough Bench, and the leading philanthropist in the country, to be so spoken to!] (Arnold Bennett, *The grim smile of the five towns*, Tauchnitz 1924: 145) [Jespersen 1946: 329]

(354) Example where a nominative pronoun + appositive appears as the complement of a preposition

Finally, I must speak of the frustrations of [**we**, the journalists] (*The Observer*, 12 August 1984) [Kjellmer 1986: 448]

In gerunds, pronominal subjects tend to surface in their objective rather than genitive form when they are modified by an appositive noun phrase (355).

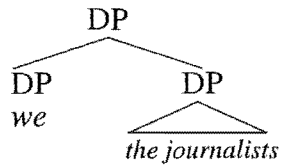
(355) Examples where an objective pronoun + appositive appears as the subject of a gerund in prepositional complement position

a. What were the chances of [**him**, Sam, getting back to work]? (Arnold Bennett, *Lord Raingo*, London 1926: 351) [Jespersen 1946: 134]

b. ther would have been something improper in [**him**, Director of the Imperial Palace, deity of thirteen hundred employees, disporting himself on the Palace floor] (Arnold Bennett, *Imperial Palace*, London 1930: 89) [Jespersen 1946: 134]

Appositive noun phrases modifying a pronoun are most plausibly analysed as DP-adjuncts, which means that they will have the same syntactic relationship with the pronoun as a nonrestrictive relative clause (cf. Section 4.16.8.2). If we adopt Cardinaletti's (1994) analysis of pronoun-NP constructions (cf. Section 4.16.6), the difference between appositive and restrictive noun phrases modifying the pronoun will be similar to the difference between nonrestrictive and restrictive relative clauses. Nonrestrictive relatives and appositive DPs adjoin to DP (356), while NPs and relatives with a restrictive interpretation adjoin to NumP or NP.

(356) Tree diagram illustrating the structural relation between a pronoun and an appositive DP



Since the pronoun in (356) heads the DP modified by the appositive, a purely case-based approach would predict that it should surface in the same case form as an unmodified pronoun. Thus, we would expect pronouns modified by appositives to receive nominative Arg-Case when they occupy the highest position on the argument hierarchy of a predicate, and objective Arg-Case when they are lower arguments of a verb or preposition. When the pronoun + appositive appears in [Spec, TP], it will be influenced by nominative Pos-Case; when it appears in [Spec, *v*P], it will check objective Pos-Case; and when it appears in [Spec, DP], it will check genitive Pos-Case. In any positions not covered by Pos-Case, the pronoun will be subject to the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective pronoun forms.

Given that Pos-Case generally outweighs other case constraints in Present-Day English (cf. Section 2.3.4), the preference for objective pronouns in gerunds such as (355) suggests that pronouns modified by an appositive noun phrase are unlikely to raise to [Spec, DP]. The use of objective pronoun forms in this context also points to the influence of additional non-case constraints, such as the trend towards invariant *me, him, her, us, them*, because objective Def-Case alone is usually unable to override nominative Arg-Case.

4.16.8 Pronouns followed by a relative clause

4.16.8.1 Case trends reported in existing studies

The case of a pronoun modified by a relative clause appears to be influenced primarily by the status of the pronoun in the matrix clause. However, some of the evidence presented in existing studies suggests that the surface form of the pronoun may also be influenced by the function of the relativised constituent in the clause.

When both the pronoun and the relativised constituent in the clause function as the subject of a finite clause, the pronoun will generally surface in its nominative

form, no matter whether the relative clause is restrictive (357)-(358) or nonrestrictive (359), and regardless of whether the relative clause is introduced by a *wh*-pronoun (357) & (359) or the complementizer *that* (358).[151]

(357) Examples of pronouns modified by a restrictive relative introduced by *who*, where both the pronoun and the relativised constituent function as the subject of a finite clause

a. [**He** who can't keep a penny] will never have many
(Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 133)

b. [**We** who are about him], have done our part (Charles Dickens, *Dombey and son*, London 1887 (Ch.D. ed.) [1848]: 389)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 103]

c. [**They** who cannot forget Gordon] must always be grateful to Tennyson
(Andrew Lang, *Tennyson*, London 1904: 189)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 98]

(358) Examples of pronouns modified by a restrictive relative introduced by *that*, where both the pronoun and the relativised constituent function as the subject of a finite clause

a. [**he** that fights and runs away] may live to fight another day
(Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 97)

b. [**we** that are true louers], runne into strange capers
(William Shakespeare, *As you like it*: II. iv. 54)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 102]

c. It was too true, though [**they** that say so] knew nothing of the matter
(Daniel Defoe, *Journal of the plague year*, ed. Brayley, London [1722]: 43) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 98]

(359) Examples of pronouns modified by a nonrestrictive relative introduced by *who*, where both the pronoun and the relativised constituent function as the subject of a finite clause

a. he gave in .. [**He**, who had never looked strong nor well], looked ghastly now (Beerbohm, *Seven men*: 21) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 99]

b. But [**she**, who had never felt these mad, amazing impulses], could nevertheless only smile fearfully (Arnold Bennett, *Old wives' tale*, Tauchnitz 1909 [1908]: 1.23) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 100]

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[151] See Jespersen (1949 [1927]: 97-103) and Kjellmer (1986: 447).

Objective pronoun forms are favoured when the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a pied-piped preposition, and the pronoun itself appears as the complement of a preposition (360).

(360) Examples where a pronoun modified by a relative clause appears as the complement of a preposition, and the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a pied-piped preposition

a. giuen to [**them** for whom it is prepared] (*Authorised version of the Bible 1611* (Facsimile ed., Oxford 1833): Mark 10.40)
[Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 192]

b. of [**him** to whom he had most of his trust on] (William Caxton, *Reynard the fox*, ed. Arber [1481]: 87) [Jespersen 1949 [1927]: 193]

According to Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 227) a case clash between the pronoun and the relativised constituent in the clause is usually resolved in favour of objective case forms. Thus, objective forms are favoured are favoured when the relativised constituent in the clause is the object of a verb or preposition, and the pronoun appears in apposition to the subject of the matrix clause (361) or in postverbal subject position (362).

(361) Examples where a pronoun modified by a relative appears in apposition to the subject of a finite clause, and the relativised constituent in the clause is object of a verb

a. thou didst say that Kallikrates - [**him** whom thou sawest dead] - was thine ancestor (Rider Haggard, *She*, London 1896 (1887): 246)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 226]

b. Our noble Arthur, [**him** Ye scarce can overpraise], will hear and know (Alfred Tennyson, *Poetical works*, in one volume, London 1894: 370)
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 226]

(362) Example of a pronoun modified by a *wh*-relative, where the pronoun appears as a postverbal subject in a locative inversion construction

Before her, in the arms of death, lay [**him** on whom her hopes of happiness seemed to have formed so firm a basis]
(Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Prose works*, ed. R.H. Shepherd, London, 1912 [c1820]: volume 1, 96) [Visser 1963: 248]

A pronoun modified by a contact relative where the relativised constituent is the object of a verb (361b) & (363), is likely to surface in the objective form even when it appears as the subject of the matrix clause (363). And independent 1sg pronouns are likely to surface in the objective form *me*, even when the relativised constituent is the subject of a finite clause (364).

(363) Examples of pronouns modified by contact relatives, where the pronoun is the subject of the matrix clause, but the relativised constituent is the object of a verb

a. [**Him** I accuse] the city ports by this hath enter'd, and Intends to appear before the people, hoping to purge himself with words (Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*; V. vi. 5) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 226]

b. for learn this, Silius, Better to leave undone than by our deed Acquire too high a fame when [**him** we serve]'s away (Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*; III. i. 13) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 226]

c. [**her** I loue] now Doth grace for grace, and loue for loue allow (Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*; II. iii. 86)[152]
[Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 226]

(364) Example of an independent 1sg pronoun modified by a nonrestrictive relative clause, where the relativised constituent is the subject of a finite clause

[**Me** that's led such a quiet life]! (J. Wain. 1969 [1953]. *Hurry on down.* Penguin Books: 101) [Erdmann 1978: 69]

Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 226) suggest that a case clash between nominative and objective case in a relative construction is rarely resolved in favour of the nominative. However, we do find instances of variation between nominative and objective forms, where the relativised constituent is the subject of a finite clause, but the pronoun modified by the relative is the object of a verb (365) or preposition (366).

(365) Examples where a pronoun modified by a relative clause functions as the object of a verb, and the relativised constituent is the subject of a finite clause

Praise [**him** that got thee], [**shee** that gaue thee sucke] (Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*; II. iii. 252) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 227]

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[152] According to Jespersen & Haislund (1949: 226), the oldest quarto has *she whom* in this sentence.

(366) Examples where a pronoun modified by a relative clause appears as the complement of a preposition, and the relativised constituent is the subject of a finite clause

a. Everything comes to [**he** who waits]. (Corby trouser-press advertisement, London Underground, 7 November 1994) [Wales 1996: 96]

b. You think you'll stop him giving it to [**them** that have a right to look to him]? (Mrs. Humphrey Ward, *David Grieve*, Tauchnitz 1892: 3.226) [Jespersen 1946: 149]

Topicalised object pronouns are particularly likely to surface in the nominative case when they are modified by a relative clause, no matter whether the relativised constituent is the subject of a finite clause (367), the object of a verb or preposition (368), or a possessive (369).[153]

(367) Example where the topicalised pronoun functions as the object of a verb, and is modified by a relative clause where the relativised constituent is the subject of a finite verb

[**She**, who had been the bane of his life]$_i$ ... he treated t_i with the respect a good son might offer a kind mother (Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, London 1867 [1852]: 378) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 225]

(368) Examples where the topicalised pronoun functions as the object of a verb, and is followed by a relative clause where the relativised constituent is the object of a verb or preposition

a. [**She** whom thine eie shall like]$_i$, thy heart shall haue t_i (Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*: 594) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

b. [**She** in whom I might have inspired a dearer love]$_i$, I had taught t_i to be my sister (Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, London (Macmillan) 1897 [1849-50]: 775) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224f]

(369) Example of a topicalised pronoun modified by non-restrictive relative clause involving the genitive *wh*-form *whose*

[**She**, <u>whose happiness you most desire</u>]$_i$, you choose t_i to be your victim (Robert Louis Stevenson, *Virginibus puerisque*, London 1894 (1881); 31)

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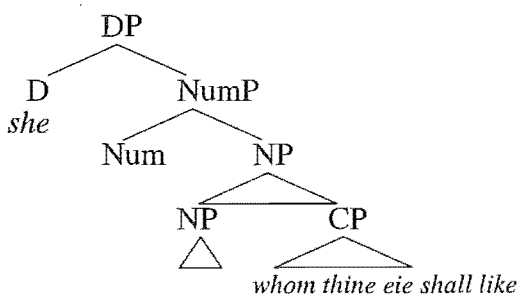
[153] See Section 4.1 for a more detailed look at the case status of topicalised pronouns.

4.16.8.2 Predictions and limitations of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case

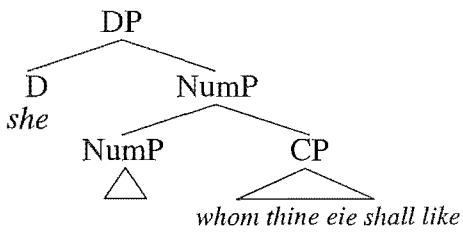
As discussed in Sections 3.8.2, 4.2.1, and 4.2.2, restrictive relatives modifying a pronoun are most plausibly analysed as NP- or NumP-adjuncts (370), while nonrestrictive relatives are best treated as DP-adjuncts (371).

(370) Tree diagram illustrating the structural relation between a pronoun and a restrictive relative in an adjunction analysis

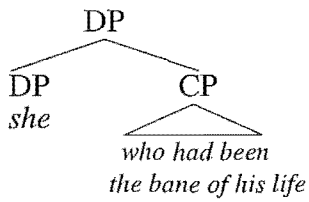
(a) if the relative is analysed as an NP-adjunct



(b) if the relative is analysed as NumP-adjunct



(371) Tree diagram illustrating the structural relation between a pronoun and a non-restrictive relative in an adjunction analysis



Since the pronoun heads the DP in (370)-(371), it will receive nominative Arg-Case if it functions as the highest argument of a matrix predicate, and

objective Arg-Case otherwise. When the DP appears in the specifier of an appropriate agreement-related functional head at Spell-Out, the pronoun will also be able to enter into Pos-Case checking.

Subject pronouns modified by a relative clause will check nominative Pos-Case with T if they appear in [Spec, TP] at Spell-Out.

As can be seen from (372) object pronouns modified by a relative clause generally follow the particle in V-particle constructions, and are thus most plausibly analysed as occupying [Spec, VP] rather than [Spec, *v*P] at Spell-Out.

(372) a. She has thrown <u>out</u> [**him** who has always supported her].
b.*?She has thrown [**him** who as always supported her] <u>out</u>.

This means that an object pronoun modified by a relative clause will be unable to check objective Pos-Case, and will instead be influenced by the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective forms in all contexts not covered by the Pos-Case constraint.

A purely case-based approach would thus predict that pronouns modified by a relative clause should surface in the nominative case when they appear as the (preverbal) subject of a finite clause, and in the objective case when they appear as the complement of a verb or preposition.

The occurrence of examples like (373) indicates that unlike lone subject pronouns, subject pronouns modified by a relative clause do not have to raise to [Spec, TP] before Spell-Out.

(373) Before her, in the arms of death, lay [**him** on whom her hopes of happiness seemed to have formed so firm a basis]
(Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Prose works*, ed. R.H. Shepherd, London, 1912 [c1820]: volume 1, 96) [Visser 1963: 248]

Since the lexical verb is unable to raise to T or C in Present-Day English, the subject pronoun in (373) is most plausibly analysed as occupying its base-position in [Spec, VP].[154] As discussed in Chapter 2, a DP can only enter into Pos-Case checking if its surface position is different from its θ-position. A subject that remains in [Spec, VP] or [Spec, *v*P], where it receives its θ-role, will therefore be

[154] As Liz Pearce (p.c.) points out, *lie* is most plausibly treated as an unaccusative verb, which means that its highest argument is base-generated in [Spec, VP] rather than [Spec, *v*P] (see Section 2.2.2.1 for further discussion).

unable to check Pos-Case. This means that its surface form will be influenced by the Arg-Case constraint, which requires subjects to be nominative, and the Def-Case constraint, which calls for objective forms.

We could thus account for the use of *him* in (373) by assuming that the Def-Case constraint exceptionally overrides the Arg-Case constraint in this instance.[155]

Alternatively, we might argue that the use of the objective form is due to Arg-Case agreement between the pronoun and the relativised constituent in the clause (cf. Bianchi 2000: 59; Alexiadou et al. 2000: 3).[156] Since the *wh*-pronoun in (373) functions as the object of a preposition, the Arg-Case inherited by its antecedent would be objective.

Although the preverbal subject pronouns in (374) could also be argued to inherit objective Arg-Case through agreement with the relativised constituent in the clause, mere Arg-Case agreement would not seem to be sufficient to account for the occurrence of objective pronoun forms in preverbal position.

(374) a. [**him** whom thou sawest dead] - was thine ancester (Rider Haggard, *She*, London 1896 [1887]: 246) [Visser 1963: 248]

b. [**Them** she lived with] would have killed her for a hat-pin (George Bernard Shaw, *Pygmalion*, [1912]: III. iii) [Visser 1963: 248]

As discussed in Chapter 2 and 3, Pos-Case generally overrides Arg-Case in Present-Day English, which means that we would expect subject pronouns in [Spec, TP] to surface in their nominative form even when they receive objective Arg-Case through Arg-Case agreement. This suggests that the use of *him* and *them* in (374) is at least partly due to non-case factors, such as the trend towards invariant *him* and *them*.

The occurrence of nominative pronoun forms in sentences like (375) could be analysed as the result of Arg-Case agreement between the personal pronoun and the *wh*-subject, but no purely case-based approach can predict the use of nominatives when both the pronoun and the relativised constituent in the clause function as the object of a verb or preposition (376).

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[155] Note that archaisms are often a feature of poetic language.

[156] As Delahunty (1982: 214-217) points out, *wh*-pronouns and operators in relative clauses are variables that must be bound at a semantic level of representation. The binding relationship between a *wh*-pronoun/operator and its antecedent effectively links the antecedent to a position on the argument hierarchy of a predicate in the relative clause, which makes it plausible to assume that the antecedent could surface in the Arg-Case associated with the open position in the relative clause.

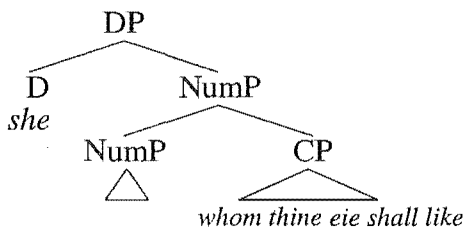
(375) Everything comes to [**he** who waits]. (Corby trouser-press advertisement, London Underground, 7 November 1994) [Wales 1996: 96]

(376) [**She** whom thine eie shall like], thy heart shall haue (Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*: 594) [Jespersen & Haislund 1949: 224]

This suggests that the selection of the nominative rather than objective form when a pronoun is modified by a relative clause, is at least partly due to factors other than case.

As can be seen from the tree diagram in (377), the pronoun asymmetrically c-commands any restrictive relative clause modifying it.

(377) Tree diagram illustrating the asymmetric c-command relationship between a pronoun and any restrictive relative clause modifying it



The occurrence of non-1sg nominative forms in this context could thus be seen as further evidence that *he, she, we, they* are favoured in asymmetrically c-commanding positions. The preference for *me* over *I* in (378) would seem to suggest that the 1sg objective form *me* patterns with the non-1sg nominatives in this respect.

(378) [**Me** that's led such a quiet life]! (J. Wain. 1969 [1953]. *Hurry on down.* Penguin Books: 101) [Erdmann 1978: 69]

4.17 Summary of trends identified in the Chapters 3 and 4

Pronoun case variation occurs in positions not covered by Pos-Case, i.e. when the pronoun occupies a surface position other than [Spec, TP], [Spec, *v*P], or [Spec, NumP]. For pronouns occupying [Spec, CP], case variation occurs primarily when C is unable to check Pos-Case on its specifier, i.e. when T has failed to raise to C, and an overt constituent intervenes between C and T at Spell-Out.

Thus, we find case variation with:

(a) (non-subject) *wh*-pronouns in embedded questions and relative clauses

(b) topicalised pronouns
(c) left-dislocated pronouns
(d) pronouns in the focus position of *it*-clefts
(e) pronouns following focus prepositions

Pronoun case variation also occurs when a pronoun is embedded in a construction that lacks the relevant agreement-related functional head required for Pos-Case checking:
(a) subjects of absolutive/independent V-*ing* constructions
(b) subjects of absolutive/independent *to*-infinitives
(c) subjects of absolutive/independent small clauses
(d) coordinated pronouns

While the case of lone unmodified pronouns tends to be variable only in contexts where the Positional Case constraint fails to apply, coordinated and modified pronouns exhibit case variation even when they appear in contexts covered by Positional Case.

The following trends reported in existing studies are difficult to account for purely in terms of Arg-Case, Pos-Case, and Def-Case:
(a) the general tendency towards the nominative *who* in *wh*-constructions, paired with a similar tendency towards objective personal pronoun forms
(b) case differences between initial and final conjuncts of coordinates (especially in view of the differences between 1sg and non-1sg pronouns), and also the distribution of *wh*-forms in sluiced questions where the *wh*-pronoun is associated with a preposition
(c) the apparent relevance of ϕ-features to pronoun case, especially in *it*-clefts, coordinates, *than* comparatives, pronoun-NP constructions

The evidence from existing studies is suggestive, but often inconclusive, when it comes to the effect of ϕ-features and relative syntactic position on pronoun case. The absence of a systematic study of these factors prompted me to carry out my own empirical survey of the distribution of personal pronoun forms in coordinates, pronoun-NP constructions, *it*-clefts, and *than* comparatives. The results of this survey will be discussed in Chapter 7.

4.18 Conclusions

The pronoun case trends discussed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 indicate that the structural position of a pronoun at Spell-Out strongly influences the case form it surfaces in. The data also point to a decline in the importance of grammatical relations (i.e. subject, object) in case marking. The grammatical relation of a pronoun (or structure containing a pronoun) clearly still has some bearing on pronoun case choice, but only unmodified, phonologically reducable lone pronouns in finite declarative clauses consistently surface in the case form corresponding to their grammatical relation in the sentence (i.e. subject = nominative, object = objective).

Differences in pronoun case choice generally correlate with differences in syntactic status, and variation often occurs in configurations that can be given more than one structural analysis. In Chapter 10, I will argue that the simultaneous availability of alternative analyses is an indicator of change in progress, and has played an important role in the development of the English pronoun system.

While alternative structural analyses/parameter settings can plausibly account for some of the pronoun case trends reported in existing studies, there are indications that the distribution of pronoun forms in many of the contexts examined is influenced by additional factors that are not easily captured in a purely case-based approach. The inadequacy of purely case-based approaches when it comes to accounting for the distribution of pronoun forms in variation contexts should not be entirely surprising. After all, pronoun case variation tends to occur in positions where the pronoun is to some extent separated from the agreement-related functional heads associated with Pos-Case checking (C and T for subjects, *v* for objects).

In Chapter 5, I will argue that the case differences between lone unmodified pronouns in canonical argument positions and *wh*-pronouns and personal pronouns that appear in other contexts are due to morphosyntactic differences between the pronouns concerned. Lone unmodified pronouns in canonical argument positions are weak; *wh*-pronouns and personal pronouns that are susceptible to non-case influences are strong. The case variation found in Present-Day English is thus symptomatic of the divergence of two series in the English pronoun system: a series of syntactically deficient weak pronouns, which basically serve as agreement markers, and a series of syntactically independent strong pronouns.